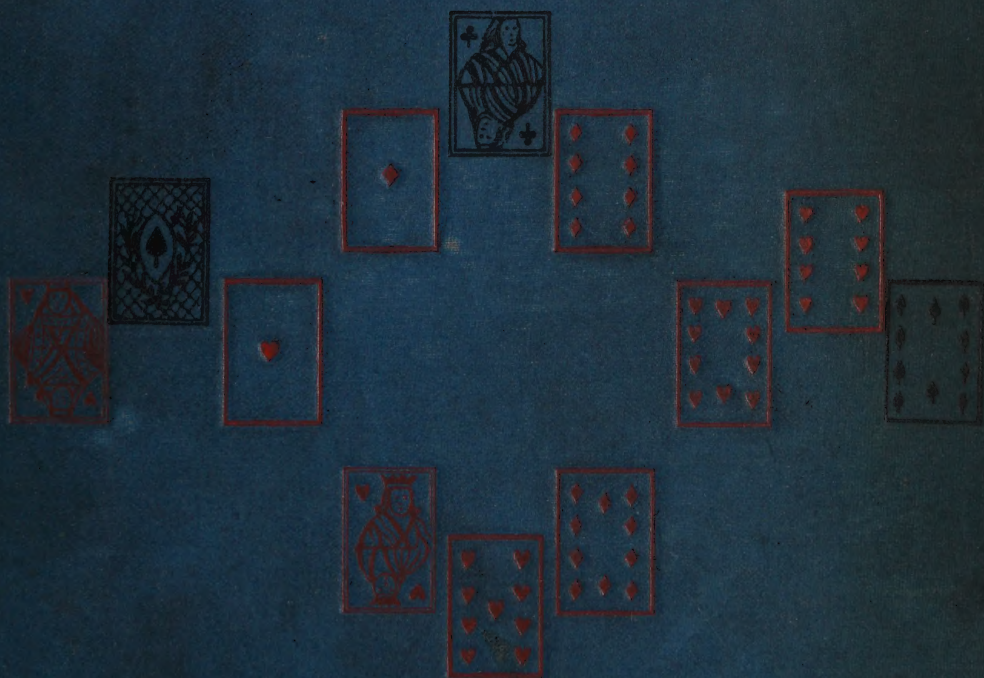


THE GAME OF SKAT

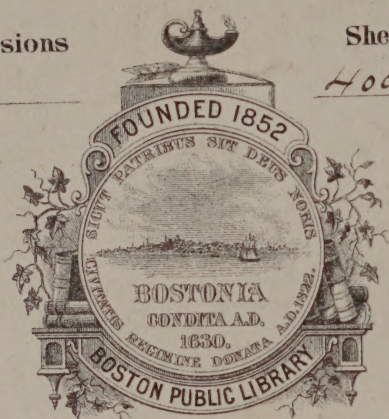


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PREFACE.

HE Game of Skat, though daily growing in popularity, is still so far a novelty in England, that the amateur, desirous of making acquaintance with it, must perforce go to the country of its origin for any reliable information. The present volume, with the exception of the Introductory Chapter, is a direct translation of a German work, the Editor assuming no higher responsibility than that of making the text fully intelligible to English readers. To that end brief notes have been added, and an obscure phrase here and there modified, but the work as a whole is practically a transcript of that of the German author, Herr Hertefeld, who on this subject speaks with an authority which no English writer can claim to possess.

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THE GAME OF SKAT.

INTRODUCTION.

THE following pages are a translation from the *Illustrirtes Skat-Buch* of A. Hertefeld, who occupies the position of "Games-Editor" on the well-known German newspaper, *Über Land und Meer*, and is accepted throughout Germany as a leading authority upon all matters relating to card games.

The game of Skat came into existence about the beginning of the present century. There is a sort of legend to the effect that it was invented by one Friedrich Ferdinand Hempel, a notary of Altenburg, a small town in Thuringia. This is, however, disputed, and it seems indeed unlikely that so elaborate a game should have sprung complete from the brain of any single inventor. On the other hand, it is clear that Altenburg was the cradle of the game. Now Altenburg is in the centre of what is known as the "Wendish" * district, and Skat is asserted by competent authorities to be an amplification or improvement of an old Wendish game known as *Schafkopf*; † several of the distinguishing features

* So named after the wandering Slavonic tribes who in the sixth century spread themselves over the North and East of Germany. In most parts the Wends have disappeared, but the peasants about Altenburg still speak the dialect and retain the costumes of their Wendish forefathers.

† Literally "Sheepshead."

of Skat—such as the use of the four knaves as paramount trumps, the order of the suits, and the relative values of the cards—being borrowed from that game. *Schafkopf* is in turn said to be a derivative from the still older Italian game of *Trappola*; and another old Italian game, *Taroc*, has also been laid under contribution in the development of Skat.

The origin of the name of Skat has occasioned nearly as much dispute as the identity of its author; various derivations, more or less fanciful, having been suggested for it. Bearing in mind, however, the fact just stated that Skat is in part a derivative of *Taroc*, the question seems to resolve itself. The terms of that game were throughout Italian, and the word *scarto* was therein used (as it is in other Italian card games to this day) to signify “I discard.” Now what is known as “the Skat” consists of the two supplementary cards which remain after the rest have been divided, and which the challenging player is entitled to take into his own hand, “discarding” in their place two of the cards dealt to him. It is obvious that Skat* derives its name from this “*scarto*,” or discard.

Up to the year 1826, the game of Skat was little known outside of Altenburg. Thence it was imported, by some youthful natives of that town, into the neighbouring University of Leipzig, and speedily became the rage in student circles; its progress being a sort of triumphal march through the various university towns. Hence departing students took it with them to their homes, and introduced it into graver circles. During the last five-and-twenty years it has spread over the whole of Germany, and has achieved such universal popularity that it may now be regarded as the national game of that country.

It is natural to infer that a game which in so short a time has attained so extraordinary a vogue, must have some exceptional recommendations. Familiarity with the game fully confirms this anticipation. In the first place, it stands

* Pronounced *Skaht*.

almost alone as being a game specially designed for three players; card games, worthy the name, of this description, being extremely rare.* Secondly, no game with which we are acquainted, even Whist not excepted, offers such infinite variety, or such unlimited scope for judgment and strategy. Indeed, the possibilities of the game are endless. At Whist, a bad hand is a bad hand, and the finest player in the world cannot make it a good one. At Skat, a hand which is hopeless from one point of view may be a very good one from another, and by a judicious selection of the particular "game" to be declared, the player may alter all the conditions of the fight. One object being unattainable, he aims at another, and often "from the nettle, danger, plucks the flower, safety." But the selection of the "game" is only a preliminary. In the subsequent play of the cards the greatest watchfulness and the most careful judgment must be exercised, the choice of a single card often making the difference between crushing defeat and brilliant victory.

It is inevitable that a game offering so much variety should be somewhat complicated, and complication too often means confusion. Such, however, is not the case with Skat. Its complexity is systematic; the complexity of the machine, not of the tangled skein. Even the computation of the values of the "games," the most formidable stumbling-block to a beginner, becomes simple enough after a very short acquaintance with the game, and its other difficulties, so far as the mere routine of play is concerned, quickly disappear in like manner. Of course to become a player, in the scientific sense, is a very much longer process, but not more so than with Chess or Whist, with which, as an intellectual recreation of the highest class, Skat may, without presumption, be compared.

As might be expected in the case of a game which has in

* Another good three-handed game (though in our own opinion much inferior to Skat) is found in *Ombre*, the national game of Spain, celebrated by Pope in the "Rape of the Lock." An interesting account of this game, by Dr. W. Pole, F.R.S., will be found in the "Cyclopædia of Card and Table Games," *tit.* *Ombre*.

so brief a time spread over so large an area, there is a good deal of diversity of practice among Skat-players, the rules prevailing in one locality often differing materially from those accepted in another. As things stand, there is no person or association of sufficient authority to propound a code of rules which shall be accepted as universally binding, and till this can be done, diversities of practice will of necessity prevail. Meanwhile, the reader will find in the following pages a clear account of what may be regarded as the standard game, and full information as to the points of difference between such game and the practice of local circles.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS IN CURRENT USE IN SKAT.

BEFORE proceeding to describe the game of Skat, it will be well in the first place briefly to indicate the meaning of certain words and phrases which we shall have frequent occasion to use in the course of our explanations. Many, indeed most of them, are dealt with in greater detail at later stages of the work, but meanwhile the beginner will find himself much assisted in getting a clear idea of the game, by having acquired at the outset an elementary knowledge of their significations.

The Player.—Skat is a game for three persons, of whom one contends against the other two. In the broader sense all are players, but the single-handed competitor is known *par excellence* as “The Player,”* while the other two are described as “The Opponents,” or “The Partners.” The

* “The Player” will throughout the following pages be distinguished by a capital letter. Where a small initial letter is used the word “player” is to be taken in its wider sense, as meaning either of the three persons taking part in the game.

right to the position of "Player" falls to that one of the three competitors who declares the "Game" of highest value. (*See GAME.*)

Game.—There are a variety of different "games" which may be played at Skat. There is a regular order of precedence between them, and the competitor declaring the highest game according to such order, is entitled to be "The Player,"* as above defined. He uses his best endeavours to win the game he has declared, while the other two competitors unite their forces to prevent his doing so. The order of the various games which may be declared (commencing with the lowest) is as under :—

The Simple Game (*Frage*) in Diamonds.†

"	"	Hearts.
"	"	Spades.
"	"	Clubs.

Tourné.

Solo in Diamonds.

"	"	Hearts.
"	"	Spades.
"	"	Clubs.

Grando.

Grando Ouvert.

Nullo.

Nullo Ouvert.

Revolution.

Thus, a competitor declaring a *Solo* is entitled, as a matter of course, to precedence over one only declaring a *Tourné*; while a *Grando* is in like manner preferred to a *Solo*. There is further a distinction between Solo games, according to the *suit* which the player proposes to make trumps,—hearts

* The position of "Player" does not, as at Napoleon, include the right to *lead*, which remains with the competitor whose turn it is to do so.

† The Simple Game is now hardly ever played. For practical purposes, therefore, the list of games may be said to commence with *Tourné*.

being preferred to diamonds, spades to hearts, and clubs to spades.

To win the game he has declared, the Player must secure at least 61 points. (*See* POINTS.)

PASSING.—A competitor declining, when his turn to do so arrives, to declare any “game,” is said to “pass.” This does not mean that he stands out of the game altogether for that round, but merely that he will be one of the Opponents, and not the “Player.”

(A player is also said to “pass” a trick, when, having the power to win it, he intentionally abstains from doing so.)

A TRICK consists of three cards—the card led, and the two played to it by the other players. A trick is of no value in itself, but only for the “points” it may contain. (*See* next article.)

POINTS.—An ace scores, to the winner of the trick containing it, ... 11 points.

A ten 10 points.

A King 4 points.

A Queen 3 points.

A Knave 2 points.*

As there are four cards of each of these denominations, the total number of points in the pack is 120. To win his game,† the Player must secure *more than half of this number, i.e., 61 or upwards*. A Player securing more than three-fourths of the total number (*i.e., 91 or upwards*), is said to make his opponents *Schneider*. Should he secure the whole number of

* The three lowest cards of each suit, viz., the nine, eight, and seven, have no scoring value. These are sometimes known as “Voids.”

† There is an exception in the case of *Nullo*, to win which the Player *must not take a single tri.k.* Should he do so, he loses the game. Points are in this case disregarded.

points (120), his opponents are made *Schwarz*. Should the opponents secure the like numbers of points, the Player is made *Schneider* or *Schwarz* in like manner; the amounts to be paid by the losers in either case being increased accordingly.

THE "SKAT." *—The pack consisting of thirty-two cards, and ten being dealt to each player, there are two cards over. These two cards are known as "The Skat," and in *Tourné* games these cards are taken into the hand of the Player, who discards two of his own in their place. Before taking in the "Skat" cards, the player *turns up* one of them (hence the name *Tourné*), and the card so turned up decides the trump suit for that round. The second card is taken into the hand without being shown. The two cards thrown out in place of the "Skat" cards still belong for scoring purposes to the hand of the Player.

In the Solo games and *Grando* the "Skat" cards remain unseen till the close of the game, but for scoring purposes they belong to the hand of the Player.

In *Nullo* games the "Skat" cards are not taken into account at all.

TRUMPS.—In the Simple game, as also in Solo, the Player himself fixes the trump suit, by declaring that he will play in such a suit. In *Tourné*, as we have seen, the card turned up from the "Skat" by the Player determines the trump suit.

In *Grando* the *only* trumps are the four knaves, ranking as under :—

1. Knave of Clubs.
2. Knave of Spades.
3. Knave of Hearts.
4. Knave of Diamonds.

The knave of hearts being superior to the knave of

* For the sake of distinction, the word "Skat," when applied to the "Skat" cards, and not to the game generally, will in the following pages be placed between inverted commas.

diamonds; the knave of spades to the knave of hearts; and the knave of clubs (which is the paramount trump) to the knave of spades.

In games where a trump suit is recognised, the cards of such suit rank next after the knave of diamonds, in the following order :—

1. Ace of the trump suit.
2. Ten „
3. King „
4. Queen „
5. Nine „
6. Eight „
7. Seven. „

The trumps are therefore eleven in number, viz., the four knaves and the seven cards above mentioned.

ORDER OF THE CARDS IN PLAY.—As the four knaves are regarded as belonging to the trump suit, the three remaining suits each consist of seven cards only, ranking as under :—

1. Ace; 2. Ten; 3. King; 4. Queen; 5. Nine; 6. Eight; 7. Seven.

In the *NULLO* games (in which, as before stated, there are no trumps), each suit consists of eight cards, and they revert to what may be called their natural order, viz. :—

1. Ace; 2. King; 3. Queen; 4. Knave; 5. Ten; 6. Nine; 7. Eight; 8. Seven.

LONG AND SHORT SUITS.—As (save in *Nullo*) a suit consists of seven cards only, three or more constitute a *long* suit; and two or less a *short* suit. A high card (say an ace or ten) with one other of the same suit is said to be “singly” guarded; with two others of the same suit, to be “twice” or “doubly” guarded. A card of a given suit standing alone in the hand is spoken of as “single,” or “a singleton.”

A RENOUNCE in a given suit has the same meaning as at Whist, viz., that the player has no card of such suit, and if therefore such suit is led, has the option either to trump or to pass the trick.

A REVOKE (as at Whist) signifies the failure to follow the suit led, while holding a card of that suit in the hand.

It must be borne in mind that the four knaves belong to the trump suit for the time being, and that therefore a knave of any suit may be played to a card of the trump suit led, and *vice versa*. In like manner (save in *Nullò*), to a knave led, either another knave or one of the trump suit must be played, the failure to do so when practicable constituting a revoke. In *Grando*, a player is bound to play a knave, if he has one, to a knave led.

SWARMING.—As tricks are valuable only for the scoring cards they contain, it is a frequent practice for one of the Opponents to play a high scoring card of another suit to a trick, in the hope that such trick will be won by his partner. A card so played is said to be “swarmed” upon the trick.

FORCES.—A player’s high cards other than trumps are known as Forces, though the term is more particularly applied to cards in sequence. An unbroken sequence from the winning card downwards is known as a “closed” force. If the winning card, or some intermediate card, be lacking, the series is known as an “open” force.

ELDER, MIDDLE AND HINDER HANDS.—The player next on the left of the dealer is known as the *elder* hand, and is entitled to the first lead; the player next on his left (and who plays next in rotation) as the *middle* (or *second*) hand; and the third player as the *hinder* (or *third*) hand.

The right to first lead is in Skat a matter of the greatest possible importance, for many “games” which could be

declared with perfect safety by elder hand, would just as certainly be lost if the Player were second or third hand.

PROVOKING.—This word is applied to the process by which the game to be played and the right to the position of Player are ascertained. The prior right to play, as between games of equal value, belongs to the Elder Hand, but the elder hand is not the first to make a declaration. The player seated next in order (*i.e.*, the second, or middle, hand) “provokes” the elder hand by declaring his readiness to play such and such a game. The elder hand is not bound to declare any higher game, but may simply “retain,” *i.e.*, himself undertake to play, the game so declared. In such case it is open to the second player to further “provoke” him by declaring a higher game, which the elder hand has again the option of retaining or declining. This continues until either the elder hand has retained a game beyond which second hand will not venture to go, or the second hand has “provoked” elder hand up to a game so high that the latter dares not accept the challenge, and therefore “passes.” In the former case, the right to “provoke” the elder hand passes to the hinder hand, who proceeds in like manner, from the point already reached, and continues till either the elder hand has declined further contest, or has undertaken to play a game beyond which he himself cannot venture to go. In the latter case the hinder hand proceeds to provoke the second hand, the right to “play” resting with the one who will undertake the higher game; or in the event of equality, with the second hand; as being (of the two) the elder.





PART I.

THE THEORY OF SKAT.

THE NATURE OF THE GAME.

OUR first duty will be to give such of our readers as are as yet unacquainted with the game of Skat, some idea of its general nature. In so doing, to avoid repetition, we shall refer the reader, for more precise information on various items, to the separate sections dealing with them.

1. Skat is a card game, which may be played by three or more persons. Only three, however, can take an active part at the same time.

Where more than three play, the inactive players for the time being sit opposite the "Skat" cards (*see post*). With four players, the non-active player for the time being deals, but takes no further part in the game. With more than five players it is preferable to break up the party into two or more tables. Skat may be played by two persons only (*see post*, tit. TWO-HANDED SKAT), but this is very rarely done.

2. Skat is a game of points, not of tricks: that is to say, the winning or losing of the game does not depend, as at Whist, Boston, or Ombre, on the number of tricks made, but

on the number of points such tricks contain. (For the value of each card, *see* CARDS.) The beginner should bear this fundamental principle in mind, as so doing will tend to prevent misunderstanding or disputes as to the score.

3. The cards used in Skat are what are known as the piquet pack, consisting of thirty-two cards.*

4. The four knaves or jacks (*see* KNAVES and MATADORS) are the highest trumps in all the "games" ("Nullo" only excepted). In "Grando" they are the only trumps.

5. Ten cards are dealt to each player. In the course of the deal (*i.e.*, after each player has received *five* cards) two cards are laid aside. These are known as the "Skat." (*See* THE DEAL.)

6. The "Skat" forms the basis of classification of the two principal modes of play, namely: (a.) *With "the Skat."* (b.) *Without "the Skat."*

7. (a.) *Games played "with the Skat."*—In the games coming under this head, the "Skat" cards (the two cards laid aside as above mentioned) are taken up and added to the hand of the Player, thereby directly assisting his game. For the hand of the Player thus practically consists of *twelve* cards, of which, before beginning to play, he discards, or throws out, such two as he pleases.†

In (b.) *Games played "without the Skat,"* the Player plays without taking up the "Skat" cards, which only become his property at the close of the round, and therefore only indirectly assist his game.

* *Viz.*, the ace, seven, eight, nine, ten, knave, queen, and king of each suit.

† The cards so discarded are turned face downwards (the Opponents not being permitted to see them), and still belong for scoring purposes to the hand of the Player.

THE NATURE OF THE GAME.

8. Of the two games "with the Skat," viz., the Simple Game (*Frage*)* and Tourné, the Simple Game ranks as the lower, and may therefore be overbidden by Tourné. (See THE SIMPLE GAME and TOURNÉ.)

9. The "Solo"† Games (which are played *without* the "Skat") begin with the Solos in the different suits, which may be partially overbidden by Nullo or Grando. (See the sections so entitled.)

10. The four suits have as between themselves a definite order of precedence, the higher superseding the lower.

11. That player who declares the highest (*i.e.*, the most valuable) Game, is entitled to play it, and is termed "the Player."

12. The Player is bound to make, in accordance with certain fixed rules, at least *one more than half* the total number of points contained in the pack. As these are 120 in number,‡ the Player, to win his game, must obtain 61 points.

13. Should the Player make exactly the half of 120, or any less number, he loses his game.

14. Should the Player not obtain at least one point more

* Literally, "Question." The Simple Game is now rarely played in Germany, but beginners will do well to recognise it in their earlier play, for it is the foundation of the higher games.

† Some players allow a Solo in *Clubs* to supersede Nullo, but the latter invariably supersedes a Solo in either of the other three suits.

‡ Made up as under:—

4 Aces	.	(value 11 points each)	=	44
4 Tens	.	(" 10 ")	=	40
4 Kings	.	(" 4 ")	=	16
4 Queens	.	(" 3 ")	=	12
4 Knaves	.	(" 2 ")	=	8
				Total . . . 120

than a fourth part of the total points (*i.e.*, 31 points) he is "Schneidered."* (See SCHNEIDER.)

15. The two other Players (known as "the Opponents" or "the Partners") form the opposing party, and unite their forces against the Player.

16. In order to ascertain which player holds the highest (*i.e.*, the most valuable) game, a course of challenging is gone through by the players. This challenging is known at Skat as "provoking." (See PROVOCATION.)

17. The order of provocation is as follows: The second (or middle) hand† asks the first, or elder hand, whether (and what game) he will play. Should the elder hand answer in the affirmative, the second hand must "provoke" him by declaring a more valuable game,‡ or "pass."

18. If the elder hand passes, then the third hand in like manner "provokes" the second hand.

19. As between two games of equal value, the elder hand has always the preference. (As to the order of the different Games, see future explanations.)

20. Should the Player win the game he has declared, he receives from each of his two Opponents (as also from each of the non-active players) the full value of such game.

21. Should the Player lose, he pays to each of his Opponents (as also to each of the non-active players) the full value of the game.

* Literally "cut," or "tailored." Skat being so essentially a German game, it has been thought better, in regard to its more characteristic incidents, to retain the original terms.

† The player between elder hand and dealer.

‡ The elder hand has then option of playing on his own account the game declared by his provoker, and so on, till the latter either retires from the contest, or announces a game which the elder hand is compelled to "pass."

22. Should neither of the players declare any game, the cards are either thrown up, or a "Ramsch" is played. (*See RAMSCH.*)

For more minute particulars we refer the reader to the separate sections.

The game of Skat allows of so many different combinations that it keeps all the players in continual suspense and excitement. Herein lies the great charm of the game, and hence arises the success it has obtained. Very few hands, and those of very rare occurrence, are absolutely *certain* to win a given game; while, on the other hand, a concurrence of lucky accidents may enable you to bring a very poor, indeed a downright hopeless-looking hand, to a successful issue, and overthrow one which seems to be all but certain of winning. It will be shown later on that a *Solo* may be lost with ten Matadors, or won without even a single Matador in the hand. A *Nullo* may be lost with the six lowest cards of one suit, and the seven, nine, ten, and knave of another; while a *Nullo Ouvert* may be won even when holding ace, king, knave, thrice repeated. No doubt these are extreme cases, belonging more or less to the province of accident or of trick, but they illustrate in a forcible way the wide variety of combinations of which Skat is capable.

As the result of the game depends on the number of points secured, it is absolutely necessary for the Player to keep constantly in mind the number of points made not only by himself, but by his opponents. The winning of a game may often be prevented by the judicious discard (on the part of an Opponent) of a valuable card, while, but for such discard, the game would have been won by the adversary, or *vice versa*.



THE CARDS.

SKAT, although, as we have seen, it has sprung from a Slav-Italo-German combination, has now become an essentially German game.

From this cause appears to have arisen the preference exhibited by many German Skat-players for the national German cards. There is, however, not the least reason why Skat should not be played with English or French cards. This indeed is already done in many circles.* German, like French or English cards, have four suits, but their symbols are different, being as under :—

ACORNS (<i>Eicheln</i>),	corresponding to the English Clubs.
LEAVES (<i>Grün</i>)	„ „ Spades.
HEARTS (<i>Roth</i> or <i>Herz</i>)	„ „ Hearts.
BELLS (<i>Schellen</i>)	„ „ Diamonds.

We give below the order of the cards in play, at the same time indicating their numerical values :—

		Points.
1.	 Knave of Clubs. The first Matador and highest trump . . . = 2	
2.	 Knave of Spades. Second Matador and second highest trump . . . = 2	
3.	 Knave of Hearts. Third Matador and third highest trump . . . = 2	
4.	 Knave of Diamonds. Fourth Matador and fourth highest trump . . . = 2	

* As a matter of fact the old-fashioned German cards are fast going out of use, even among German players. No player of any other nationality would dream of using them.

THE SUITS.

5. The four Aces .					Points. each = 11
6. The four Tens .					„ = 10
7. The four Kings .					„ = 4
8. The four Queens					„ = 3
9. The four Nines .					„ = 0
10. The four Eights.					„ = 0
11. The four Sevens					„ = 0

Nines, eights and sevens are of no scoring value.

The value of a given card is alike in all four suits.

The only exception from the rule of the cards ranking as above occurs in the case of “Nullo.”* (See NULLO.)

THE SUITS.

DIFFERENCE of suit is a very material point in the game of Skat. The four suits rank in a definite order, a suit of higher rank superseding or excluding one of a lower rank. As between two nominally equal games,

* There are in Nullo no trumps, and the cards rank in their normal order, *viz.*, ace (highest), king, queen, knave, ten, nine, eight, seven.

that in the higher suit (*i.e.* played with the higher suit as trumps) always takes precedence.

The order of the suits is as follows :—

First.	Second.	Third.	Fourth.
			
Club.	Spade.	Heart.	Diamond.

Diamonds are the suit of lowest rank, and are superseded by Hearts; Spades supersede Hearts; and Clubs, Spades; Clubs being therefore the highest suit.

THE FOUR KNAVES.

First.	Second.	Third.	Fourth.
			

THE four knaves are in all the games (Nullo only excepted) the highest trumps, so that, whatever suit be declared to be trumps, the four knaves, in the order above indicated, take precedence of the cards of such suit. The ace of the designated suit is the *fifth* trump, the ten the *sixth*, the king the *seventh*, the queen the *eighth*, the nine the *ninth*, the eight the *tenth*, and the seven the *eleventh*. The pack therefore contains eleven trumps, namely, the four knaves, and the seven remaining cards of the indicated suit. This must be borne carefully in mind.



MATADORS.

I. GAMES "WITH MATADORS."

LL the trumps in the hand of the Player, ranging in unbroken sequence *from the best knave* (the knave of clubs) *downwards*, are called "Matadors." The cards of the "Skat" are reckoned as belonging to the hand of the Player.* The eleven trumps *may* therefore all rank as Matadors, the player holding nine (or even ten) in his own hand, and the remainder being in the Skat. Should, however, the sequence be broken at any point, it is only the cards *above* the missing link which count as Matadors.

Example.—A Player has eight trumps, namely, the first, second, and fourth knaves, ace, ten, king, queen, eight. He declares "Solo with two Matadors," and wins the game. At the close of the hand he turns up the Skat, and finds therein the third knave and the nine of trumps. These two cards complete the sequence, and he has therefore played, not with *two*, but with *ten* Matadors, and his game is valued accordingly.

How important a bearing the number of Matadors has on the value of the game will be explained later on, under the title "THE SCORE."

2. GAMES "WITHOUT MATADORS."

If the first knave (the knave of clubs) is absent from the Player's hand, his game is "without a Matador," for none of his other trumps in that case rank as such. If the cards next following such first knave are also lacking, his game is "*without*" so many Matadors as are lacking of the cards directly following such knave.

Thus, if it is only the first knave that is wanting, the Player plays "*without one*." If both this and the next knave (the knave of spades) are wanting, then he plays "*without two*." If all four knaves are lacking, "*without four*." If the

* See p. 13, § 11.

ace of the trump suit is also lacking, "*without five*," and so on. If the Player holds no trump whatever, he is said to play "*without eleven*."

In valuing a game "*without Matadors*," any trumps which may chance to be included in the "*Skat*," or are thrown out, are reckoned as if they were in the hand of the Player, as in the case of the game "*with Matadors*."

A game "*without* (so many) Matadors" is of the same value as a game "*with*" the same number of Matadors. Thus a game "*without one*" ("*two*," "*three*," &c.) reckons exactly the same as a game "*with one*" ("*two*," "*three*," &c.) *

THE PRELIMINARIES OF THE GAME.

I. DRAWING FOR PLACES.

BEFORE the game begins the positions of the players, and the order in which they are to deal, are decided by "*drawing*." For this purpose a pack of cards is spread face downwards in a semi-circle on the table, and each draws a card.

The player who has drawn the lowest card has the choice of place at the table. The other players seat themselves according to the order of the cards drawn by them, commencing from his left (the same order in which play proceeds),

* See *post*, p. 42, and the section entitled THE SCORE. We have endeavoured in vain to find some scientific reason for this mysterious arrangement, which in our own opinion is almost the only weak point in an otherwise admirable game. The only explanation we have seen is that in the one case the value of the "*game*" is enhanced by the fact of holding so many leading cards, and in the other by the increased difficulty of winning the game announced when the same cards are in the hands of the opposing players. This appears to us absurd. The English player can however only take the game as he finds it.

the holder of the next higher card throughout seating himself to the left of the player who has drawn the next lower. The same rule applies whether three or four players take part. Should two players have drawn cards alike, the value of such cards settles the order of precedence so far as regards the third (or, as the case may be, the other two) players, but the ties draw again for places between themselves.

Example.—A. has drawn an *ace*, B. and C. each a *nine*, and D. a *seven*. The order of the Players is as follows: D. is first, with choice of place, B. and C. are second and third, and A. fourth.* B. and C., however, draw again as between themselves, to settle which shall take the place next D.

In general, very little importance is attached at Skat to the positions of the players, and each seats himself just where he may chance to be. This, however, is irregular, and more attention should be bestowed on the choice of places, for the order in which the players seat themselves is by no means a matter of indifference. The idiosyncracies of the persons who sit next before and after a given player may have a material influence on the result of the game.

Moreover, Skat is a game which on account of its many peculiarities requires strict regularity of procedure. Minute exactitude and an absolute obedience to the rules of the game do much to prevent disputes, and to enhance the true enjoyment of the game.

2. SHUFFLING.

The player who has drawn the lowest *club* deals. Should no club have been drawn, the drawing is repeated until a club appears. If two packs of cards are used, the dealer chooses which of the two he pleases, and shuffles the cards thoroughly together.

The cards must be shuffled face downwards, so that the

* In cutting as well as in play the ace is regarded as the *highest* card. The ten is the next card, then king, queen, knave, and so on down to the seven.

other players cannot see what they are. While the dealer distributes the cards, the middle hand (*i.e.*, the player to his *right*) shuffles the second pack, and places it at his own right and consequently to the left of the elder hand.

3. CUTTING.

The shuffled cards are laid beside the dealer's right-hand neighbour, who lifts off the upper portion of the pack and lays it on the table. The dealer places the remainder of the pack upon this portion, and the pack is then ready to be dealt.

The dealer must neither look at the undermost card himself, nor allow it to be seen by any other player.

4. DEALING.—LAYING OUT THE SKAT.— MISDEALS.

The dealer distributes the cards face downwards, beginning with the player on his left, and giving to each *five* cards. (With four players the dealer himself receives no cards.) After this first round the dealer lays *two* cards face downwards on the table (to form the "Skat"), and then proceeds with the second round, again giving five cards to each player.

It is permissible to lay out the "Skat" cards at some other stage of the deal. They must, however, be taken neither from the top nor the bottom of the pack.

Variations.—The cards are also sometimes dealt by *three*, *four*, and *three*, making *three* rounds; or by *two* at a time, making five rounds. This should not, however, be left at the option of any one player, but if it is desired to adopt any such variation, this should be agreed on before the game begins. The best and simplest method of dealing is, however, by two rounds of five cards each, as above mentioned. The other methods are comparatively little used.

No player is allowed to take up his cards until the last cards have been dealt.

PRELIMINARIES OF THE GAME.

Each player receives ten cards, and is bound to see for himself that he has exactly the right number. If such be not the case, it is a misdeal, and the cards must be dealt anew.

If, through clumsiness on the part of the dealer, a card is exposed, the player to whom such card belongs must declare whether he will accept the card, or whether there shall be a fresh deal. His declaration, once made, is conclusive. If the mistake arises from the fault, not of the dealer, but of one of the other players, there must be a fresh deal, and the offender becomes liable to the penalties of a misdeal, as specified below.

If either of the "Skat" cards is exposed, there must invariably be a fresh deal.

A misdeal is punished by five points (or in some companies ten) being deducted from the score of the dealer. This penalty is only inflicted when the other players have not taken up their cards during the progress of the deal, and have discovered the misdeal in due time, *i.e.*, before play begins. Should the Player discover after the play has begun, that he does not hold the right number of cards, he is always regarded as having lost the game. If one of the Opponents has not the right number of cards, and does not call attention to the fact before play begins, the game of the Player is regarded as won. Should the discovery of the mistake not be made until the play of the last trick, if the winning party has already secured a Schneider, the Schneider holds good. (*See SCHNEIDER.*) Should the Player, holding the proper number of cards, have been made Schneider, but the game, notwithstanding, be declared in his favour as won because the Opponents had an improper number of cards,* he, of course, only scores in his own favour the game, and not the Schneider.

If the Player and one of the Opponents have each an incorrect number of cards, the game is cancelled. The hand can only be continued by special arrangement.

* Both must be involved, for if the one Opponent has a card short, the other must have one in excess, save in the case of the pack being defective, or of the missing card having fallen to the ground.

Variation.—The practice according to which the second Opponent, when the Player and one of his Opponents have each an incorrect number of cards, scores the game as won by himself personally, is contrary to the fundamental principle of Skat. According to such principle there are only two parties to the game, the Player and the Opponents. The two players on the latter side are indissolubly united, and must stand or fall together. If it were customary at Skat always to make the person who committed an error responsible for it, many a Skat party would be glad when play came to an end. It is only where one of the Opponents *revokes* that he alone must bear the consequence, and even in this case his partner cannot be a winner.

5. ELDER HAND, MIDDLE HAND, HINDER HAND.

THE ORDER OF PLAY.

The player who sits on the left of the dealer for the time being is the *Elder Hand*. He is entitled to the lead, and as between games of equal value, takes precedence over the other players. The second player is known as the *Middle Hand*; and the third player as the *Hinder Hand*.

Skat is played from right to left, that is to say, the player sitting on the left of the leader next plays his card to the card led.

6. THE SKAT.

The two cards, which the dealer lays separately face downwards on the table, are known as "The Skat." (For the derivation of this word, *see* the Introduction.)

The "Skat" in every game save *Nulló* directly or indirectly benefits the Player; *directly* in the Simple Game or *Tourné*, inasmuch as he takes it into his hand, and from the twelve cards which he then holds, discards two at his pleasure; *indirectly* in the Solo Games, since the two cards of which it consists score for the Player any points they may contain, and may still further enhance the value of his game by increasing the number of his *Matadors*. They have a further influence on the result of the game, as diminishing to the

like extent the hands of the Opponents. It should, however, be stated that cases do now and then occur in which the "Skat" prejudicially affects the score of the Player.

N.B. There is one method of reckoning Schwarz, according to which the "Skat," in the event of the Player not making a single trick, belongs to the opposite party. (*See SCHWARZ.*)

7. PLAYING WITH THE SKAT EXPOSED.

The practice of playing with the "Skat" cards exposed (which prevails in some localities) is opposed to the very nature of Skat, and should never be permitted.



THE DIFFERENT GAMES.

I. GENERAL CLASSIFICATION.



HE games most usually recognised in Skat may, as we have already stated, be divided into two categories, namely :

1. Games with the aid of the "Skat."
2. Games without the aid of the "Skat" (Solo Games).

The games with the direct assistance of the "Skat" may be divided into—

- a. The Simple Game.
- b. Tourné.

The games without the aid of the "Skat" were originally limited to the *Solos* in the various suits, but *Grando* and *Nullto* were afterwards included. *Nullto* may be played either with the cards held in the ordinary way (their face being hidden), or with the cards exposed (*Nullto Ouvert*). *Uno* and *Duo* must be rejected, as forming no part of the orthodox game. (*See the description of particular Games.*)

2. THE WINNING OR LOSING OF THE GAME.

To win the game, the Player must have secured at least *one point more* than the half of the total number of points in the pack.

The pack contains in all 120 points.* Having 61 points, therefore, the Player has won the game ; with 60 or less he has lost it.

3. SCHNEIDER.

Should the Player secure at least *one point more than three-fourths of the total number* (i.e., 91 points), he has made a "Schneider," and his opponents are "Schneidered."

In order to escape being himself "Schneidered," the Player must make at least *one point more than one-fourth of the total number* (i.e., 31 points).

The opposing party is with 30 points secure from "losing a Schneider," or "being Schneidered," and with 90 points "wins a Schneider," i.e., "Schneiders" the Player.

4. SCHNEIDER DECLARED.

If the hand of the Player is so strong that he thinks himself safe to make 91 points, he "declares" Schneider.

Schneider can only be "declared" in the case of a Solo Game.

N.B.—This rule is not observed in all circles.

Great caution is necessary in declaring Schneider, and the Player must not allow himself to be tempted by the hope of greater gains, to trust to mere chance and declare Schneider without sufficient justification. Should a Player, who has declared Schneider, not obtain 91 points, he loses just as much as he hoped to win ; that is to say, a game "with Schneider declared," and this happens, whether he has secured the need-

* See note on p. 13.

ful points for the ordinary game (without Schneider) or not. Should he himself be Schneidered, he loses as much as he aimed at winning, *plus* the value of an ordinary game. (See THE SCORE.)

5. SCHWARZ.*

Schwarz may be made in two different ways, which may be described as the "Trick Method" and the "Point Method" respectively.

A. *The Trick Method.*

If either party gains every trick, the opposite party is made "Schwarz," or "loses a Schwarz." Should the Player be made Schwarz, the "Skat" cards still belong to him, but are only taken into consideration in settling the precise value of the lost game. Should the Player have secured one trick, though it contain not a single point, he is not Schwarz, even though there be likewise no points in the "Skat" cards.

B. *The Point Method.*

If the one party makes 120 points, the opposing party is "Schwarz." Should the Player win no trick, the "Skat" belongs to his Opponents.

The Player is "Schwarz," even though he may have secured one or more tricks, if such tricks and the "Skat" chance to contain no points. In like manner, the Opponents may be made "Schwarz" with one or more tricks, should such tricks contain no points.

Both methods are in common use, but that first described, according to which tricks and not points determine the Schwarz, is the more widely practised, though the latter is in principle the more correct.

* Literally, "Black."

6. SCHWARZ DECLARED.

Schwarz can only be "declared" in the case of a *Solo* Game.

N.B.—This rule is disregarded in some circles.

What we have said as to the declaration of "Schneider," equally applies to the declaration of "Schwarz."



GAMES WITH THE HELP OF THE "SKAT."

I. THE SIMPLE GAME.*



ALTHOUGH the Simple Game is now hardly ever played, its small value hardly offering sufficient inducement, we must still regard it as an integral, and, to a certain extent, a fundamental portion of the Game of Skat. If a player thinks that with the help of the "Skat" he can win a game in a given suit (discarding, after having taken up the "Skat," his two worst or least suitable cards, without losing the benefit of the points they may contain), he declares a "Simple Game" in the suit in which he proposes to play.

But inasmuch as the Player, after he has taken up the "Skat," may always play in a higher suit (though never in a lower) than the one he has declared; he always begins with a declaration in the *lowest* suit (viz., diamonds), so as to keep himself as free as possible for his final selection, and only when the next player overbids him, declares a suit of higher rank. The advantage is obvious.

* Known in Germany as "*Die Frage*," "The Question."

A player holds for example the cards following :



Here he will, though not holding a single diamond, begin by declaring a game in the diamond suit, as he can then, if he becomes the Player, play at pleasure in diamonds, hearts, spades, or clubs. Should he have been "provoked" to a declaration in hearts, and find in the "Skat" two good spades or clubs, he can play in spades or clubs accordingly ; but when once he has gone as high as clubs, he must play in that suit, or throw up the game, and pay.

2. TOURNÉ.

Since, as we have already stated, the Simple Game is now rarely played (indeed, is much more the exception than the rule), *Tourné* usually forms the starting point or first stage of the game. *Tourner* is a French word, signifying to "turn," or "turn over." The Player chooses whichever card he pleases of the "Skat," and turns it up. He is now bound to play in the suit thus indicated (which becomes the trump suit), or to throw up the game.

The Player then takes up the second card of the "Skat" (without showing it), and places it with the first card in his hand. He then throws out, or "discards," such two cards as he thinks best calculated to improve his prospect of winning the game. (These may or may not be the same two cards just taken in from "Skat." See DISCARDING in Part II.)

Should one of the four knaves be turned up, the Player has the option either to make the suit of such knave trumps, or to play a "Grando." (See GRANDO TOURNÉ.) He must, however, decide which he will do before he takes up the second card. On the other hand, should he turn up a *seven*, he may play "Nullo." In order to venture on a *Tourné*, the Player should have at least two knaves, and three suits pretty equally

divided, with the high cards not too scantily guarded. *Tourné* is sometimes risked with two suits, but if the Player has only one long suit, the attempt to win a *Tourné* is usually a failure.

A weak Solo is easier to win than an uncertain *Tourné*. (For *Grando Tourné* and *Nullo Tourné*, see *GRANDO* and *NULLO* respectively.)

We subjoin some examples of *Tourné* hands :

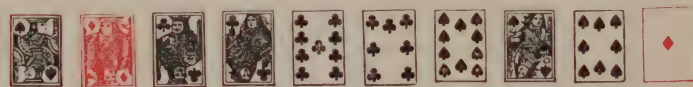
A *TOURNÉ* HAND IN FOUR SUITS.



A *TOURNÉ* HAND IN THREE SUITS.



A *TOURNÉ* HAND IN TWO SUITS.



The ace of the third suit (in the last example) renders the *Tourné* possible, because if clubs or diamonds should be turned up, you can throw out, say, the ten of spades.*

* It must be borne in mind that the two cards thrown out are not lost to the Player. On the contrary, the points therein contained are a certainty towards his score.



SOLO GAMES (WITHOUT THE HELP OF THE "SKAT").

I. SUIT SOLOS.

SOLO is played with the cards of the hand alone, without the help of the "Skat."

In order to play a Solo, you should be able, by means of the cards in your hand, without reckoning on any assistance from the "Skat," to secure the game (*i.e.*, to make 61 points). The Player should never speculate on an exceptionally favourable disposition of the cards in the hands of the adversaries; neither should he, on the other hand, reckon on an exceptionally unfavourable arrangement: for anyone who plays on the latter principle falls too easily into the bad habit of letting slip good cards, and throws away his best games for very fear of losing them. A player of this kind spoils many a game with his strong cards, and others do not care to play with him.*

The Player decides the suit in which he proposes to play a Solo. But if he has been "provoked" to name a given suit (*see* "Provocation") he may play either in this or some higher, but cannot play in a lower suit.

The "Skat," although the Player can make no direct use of it, still does him indirect service, and operates to his advantage (though sometimes indeed to his disadvantage†), inasmuch as the points and Matadors therein contained count for the Player.

* It is a great point at Skat that the players should be pretty equally matched. One bad player is a constant source of irritation to the other two, because by the fortune of war he is constantly associated with the one or the other of them, who will naturally suffer for his blunders.

† This seems a paradox, but it will be made clear later on. The Player on the strength of his own hand declares a game *without* [so many] Matadors. Should the lowest of such Matadors chance to be in the "Skat," even though he secure the needful number of points, the Player loses, inasmuch as instead of winning a game "without (say) four," he has won one "without three," which is of less value.

2. SOLOS IRRESPECTIVE OF SUIT.

A. *Grando*.

In the game of "Grando" all suits are alike, the four knaves being the only trumps and the only Matadors. The highest "Grando" is therefore that "with four Matadors." The Player must win the game by means of his knaves and high cards in plain suits.

B. *Grando Ouvert*.

In Grando Ouvert all the cards of the Player, after the first trick, are laid face upwards on the table. The Opponents may openly take counsel together, in order to procure the loss of the Player's game.*

Grando Ouvert with four Matadors (otherwise known as Grando Mort) is the highest game that can be played at "Skat," and cannot be overbidden by any other.

N.B.—Grando Ouvert is not universally recognised.

C. *Grando Tourné*.

If after the Player has declared a *Tourné*, he chances to turn up a knave, he may, in place of *Tourné*, declare *Grando*; but he must do so before turning up the second card.

N.B.—The rule prevailing in some circles, whereby the Player is permitted to look at the second card before making his decision, is to be condemned.

D. *Nulló*.

The principle of *Nulló* is, that the Player undertakes to take no tricks. Should he win even a single trick, he has lost the game.

* This seems a rule of very doubtful expediency. The Player is already at a sufficient disadvantage by exposing his own cards. Moreover, it is difficult to see how his opponents can consult on a joint course of action without communicating to each the contents of their hands, which is contrary to the whole spirit of the game.

Nullo is, as we have already stated, an interpolation of later date, and is the only game which does not fully harmonise with the general principle of "Skat : " * inasmuch as the result depends on *tricks* and not on *points*. The "Skat" cards are not taken into account.

In *Nullo* the relative value of the cards is altered. They now rank as under :—

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
Ace.	King.	Queen.	Knave.	Ten.	Nine.	Eight.	Seven. †
							

E. *Nullo Ouvert*.

Nullo Ouvert is a *Nullo* made more difficult to win, by the fact that the Player after the first trick lays his cards face upward on the table. The two adversaries play with their own cards concealed against the exposed cards of the Player, but are not permitted to consult together.

The "Skat" cards remain turned down.

F. *Grand Nullo Ouvert*.

(OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "REVOLUTION.")

In *Grand Nullo Ouvert* (Revolution) all the players expose their cards from the outset, *i.e.*, before even the first trick is played. ‡ The Opponents may consult aloud throughout the game, how best to circumvent the Player, and before playing the first trick may mutually exchange as many cards as they please.

Any one who declares Revolution should hold such cards as, under the most unfavourable circumstances, cannot

* Uno and Duo (see p. 35) do not properly belong to Skat at all.

† We have selected the club suit for the purpose of illustration, but all suits rank alike in *Nullo*, and there are no trumps.

‡ In ordinary *Nullo Ouvert*, as will have been seen, the Player alone exposes his cards, and this not until the first trick has been played.

win anything. In order to compensate for the very high value (72 points, *see* the table, p. 125) attached to this game, all conceivable fair means of bringing about the overthrow of the Player are permissible.

G. *Nullo with Tricks.*

In order fitly to punish an inconsiderate declaration of Nullo, a modification (borrowed from the game of Preference) has been adopted in some circles, according to which the Player is punished for each trick which he wins in Nullo, to the extent either of the whole value of the game for each such trick, or the whole value of the game for the first trick, and for each subsequent trick a fixed amount, usually equivalent to *half* the value of the game. We cannot however recommend this method of play, for the use of tricks as measures of value is out of harmony with the leading principle of Skat; and some other means should therefore be sought for effecting the object, desirable as it may be.

H. *Nullo Tourné.*

If, when Tourné has been declared, a *seven* is turned up, the Player is at liberty to play *Nullo*; he must however decide whether to play Nullo or the game already declared, before turning up the second card. After he has turned up the second card, he may however amend his declaration of Nullo by declaring Nullo Ouvert.

I. *Purchase-Nullo.*

The Player who declares Purchase-Nullo is entitled to discard two cards from his hand, and to take in the "Skat" cards, without showing them, in their place.

[*Variation.*—The Player may throw out either one or two cards, at his option, and complete his hand from the "Skat."]

We cannot recommend Purchase-Nullo for general adoption.

K. *Nullo with Trumps.*

(NULLO WITH THE KNAVES.)

Another variation from ordinary Nullo is "Nullo with Trumps," or "Nullo with the Knaves." This game is founded on Grando; the four knaves, as in that game, being made trumps. The possession of a single knave may be fatal to the Nullo Player, for unless he chance to be Elder Hand, he can never have the opportunity of leading his knave, and so getting rid of it. The Opponents, of course, take care to use their knaves for trumping, so that the Player's knave, even though it be the one of lowest value, is left at the last upon his hands. We have no inclination for this mode of play, which is but rarely adopted, but we mention it as a curiosity.

EXCEPTIONAL GAMES.

I. UNO AND DUO.



WE feel bound to mention these two games for the sake of completeness, though we deny them any legitimate position in the game of Skat. They might serve perhaps some purpose in the case of value-provocations, where they have now and then been a help in time of need to a player who has overshot the mark. But in view of the extraordinary many-sidedness of Skat, and the almost endless variations which it admits of, games of this kind (though they might be acceptable enough at Ombre or Solo Whist), are here quite unnecessary, and indeed detract from the interest of the game.

In Uno and Duo all the suits are alike, and the four knaves (as in Grando) are the only trumps. The "Skat" cards are not taken up. Both games may be played either with the face of the cards hidden (in the ordinary way) or with the cards exposed (*Ouvert*).

The Player who declares *Uno* must in the course of the game make *one trick*, neither more nor less. In *Duo* the Player must make *two* tricks, neither more nor less. If played with the faces of the cards concealed, both games are pretty easy, but considerably more difficult if played *Ouvert*.

2. RAMSCH.

Ramsch (or Ramses), is in reality a distinct game, appertaining to Beer Skat.* When all the players "pass," either the cards are thrown up, and the next player deals afresh, or a round of *Ramsch* is played. Where the Simple Game is still in use, this state of things rarely occurs. But as of late years the Simple Game is almost entirely abandoned, the opportunities for Ramsch are more frequent. Ramsch, by the way, affords a very effective method of punishing overtimid players.†

In Ramsch each plays on his own account, and takes possession of the tricks he wins. All suits are alike. As in *Grando*, the four knaves are the only trumps, and the "Skat" cards remain neutral. The player who has in the tricks won by him the largest number of points, loses the game, and pays ten points to each of the other players. A player, winning no trick, is called a "Maiden." Should there chance to be a "Maiden" in the game, the loser pays to each adversary fifteen points; if there are two "Maidens," twenty points. If two players have the same number of points, they either both pay the third or receive from him, according as they or he have the larger number. Should all three players have exactly the same number of points, the game is a "draw."

* See *post*.

† The class of players here referred to are those described at page 31, who spoil sport and upset the calculations of their fellow-players by failing to declare such games as their cards justify. If such a player, holding a good hand, passes, and the play in consequence resolves itself into a Ramsch, he is extremely likely to be the loser, as his good cards will naturally make tricks.

"Middle" Ramsch.

In "*Middle*" *Ramsch* the loser is ascertained on a different principle. That Player who has neither the largest nor the smallest number of points, and is therefore "in the middle" between the two others, is the loser.

N.B.—The practice of allowing a Player at *Ramsch* to trump with a knave instead of following suit, is not to be recommended.

Some Players maintain that the points of the "*Skat*" cards should be added to those of the Player who takes the last trick, but this is incorrect.

3. SPITZ.

This game, which, like the foregoing, is only recognised in particular districts, is a reversed *Grando*. The four knaves are the only trumps. The other cards rank in the reverse of the usual order, as follows :—



The seven being the *highest*, and the ace the *lowest* card.

4. SKAT HAZARD.

Although we have no desire to lend even the smallest countenance to the gambling element in "*Skat*," exceptional circumstances may now and then arise in which the end justifies the means.*

Skat Hazard may be properly used for the creation of funds for benevolent purposes, or other objects of genuine advantage to society.

The forms of *Skat Hazard* most in favour are :—

A. *Point Ramsch.*

In this form of the game, the player who has the largest

* The German author must be held responsible for this expression of opinion.

number of points pays that number to each of his opponents. In circles where *Point Ramsch* is played, it is customary to finish every sitting with three rounds of Compulsory (or "Must") Ramsch.

B. "*Compulsory*" (or "*Must*") *Ramsch*.

In "*Compulsory*" Ramsch no other game can be declared. Nothing but Ramsch can be played, and the loser pays "one" for each point he holds. Compulsory Ramsch may be declared by the Elder Hand whenever a change seems desirable to enliven the company.

C. *Compulsory* (or "*Must*") *Grando*.

The Elder Hand for the time being is bound to play *Grando*.

D. *Compulsory* (or "*Must*") *Nullo*.

The Elder Hand for the time being is bound to play *Nullo*.

As to the morality of the above games, it is hardly necessary to express an opinion.

E. *Aix-la-Chapelle Skat*.

Under this designation is known in certain districts, particularly in the Rhineland, a form of the game in which nothing but *Grando* or *Ramsch* is admissible.

Grando may be played either counting or *not* counting the knaves. In the former case, a player may be overbidden, but in the latter case not so; the Elder Hand having declared *Grando* is entitled to "retain" it.

Should the Player win the game, so many points are added to his score, as are contained in the tricks made by him; if he loses, he is debited with as many points as have been made by his opponents.

Where the knaves are taken into consideration, the points

above mentioned are multiplied by the number of Matadors *with* or *without* which the game was played.

If no *Grando* is declared, *Ramsch* is played, the score being reckoned as at *Point Ramsch*, above described. (See SCORING AT RAMSCH.)

The "Skat" cards do not count for either party.

THE SCORE.

I. THE METHODS OF COUNTING THE SIMPLE GAME, TOURNÉ, AND SOLO, RESPECTIVELY.

THE method of scoring at the game of Skat is fairly simple. We have in the first place a "basis-number" representing the primary value of the game. This "basis-number" (the *multiplicand*) is multiplied by another (the *multiplier*), determined by the unit representing the value of the game, *plus* the Matadors *with* or *without* which it is played, and what may be called the contingencies of the game.*

A. *The Basis-Number (or Multiplicand).*

The basis-number starts with unity, and gradually rises according to the relative importance of the various games; the value of a *Tourné* being four higher than that of a Simple Game in the same suit, and the value of a *Solo* game four higher than that of a *Tourné* in the same suit. This mode of reckoning may be regarded as the normal in the national or standard game. A frequent variation from this mode of reckoning is to make the basis-number alike for a *Tourné* or a *Solo* in the same suit.

* E.g., the Player or the Opponents being made *Schneider* or *Schwarz*.

Which of these two methods of counting is the more correct, is one of the most warmly contested points among amateurs of the game. Among experts, the great majority declare for the higher value of the *Solo* games. Those players who are for making *Tourné* and *Solo* of equal value, regard *Tourné* as being rather a risky game as compared with *Solo*, which, as being played with known cards, is judged more easily, and, therefore, claim that *Tourné* should be placed on at least an equality with *Solo*.

But apart from the fact that in a card game of a serious character it is not desirable to offer premiums to speculative play, the risk in *Tourné* is by no means so great as the supporters of this theory would have us believe. A hand of cards may be dealt, with which alone a *Solo* could not possibly be played, but which with the aid of two other suitable cards may be transformed into a safe hand. In general, the chance of converting fairly good *Tourné* cards by the *Tourné* into a winning hand, may be reckoned as 3 to 1; that is to say, there is one unfavourable as against three favourable suits, which with the help of the "Skat" would make the hand a good one. A good original hand is less often met with, and should according to sound principle be valued at a higher rate than a hand which, as in the case of *Tourné*, requires the help of the "Skat." In most cases the "Skat" is an assistance. It cannot possibly be disadvantageous, for should the cards it contains not meet the views of the Player, they may again be discarded. It does not therefore appear logical to place a *Tourné* on the same level with a *Solo*. A game played with the cards as they stand must naturally rank higher than where the hand is strengthened by supplementary cards.

A second variation is to make the basis values of the Simple Game and of *Tourné* rise uniformly (by one at a time) from 1 to 8, but in *Solo* to advance by two, so that for a *Solo* in diamonds the basis value is 6, in hearts 8, in spades 10, and in clubs 12. The subjoined table gives a synoptical view

THE SCORE.

of these three different methods of reckoning the basis values.

TABLE OF BASIS VALUES.

		The Standard game.	First Variation.	Second Variation.
SIMPLE GAME in	Diamonds . .	1	1	1
	Hearts . .	2	2	2
	Spades . .	3	3	3
	Clubs . . .	4	4	4
TOURNÉ in	Diamonds . .	5	5	5
	Hearts . .	6	6	6
	Spades . .	7	7	7
	Clubs . . .	8	8	8
SOLO in	Diamonds . .	9	5	6
	Hearts . .	10	6	8
	Spades . .	11	7	10
	Clubs . . .	12	8	12

N.B.—Besides the different modes (above-indicated) of reckoning the basis numbers, the value of the Solo may be increased by enlargement of the multiplier or by increasing the final total.

B. The Multipliers.

The multiplier, by which the basis-value (or multiplicand) is to be multiplied, is derived from the following items:—

- (a). Unity, representing the value of the game itself.
- (b). The number of Matadors which the Player has (or has not) in his hand. ("With" or "without" so many Matadors.)
- (c). The contingencies of the game.*

a. THE GAME.

The primary value of the game is always represented by Unity = 1.

* See note on p. 39.

b. THE NUMBER OF MATADORS.

With Matadors in hand (including the "Skat").—As we have already seen (at page 19), all cards of the trump suit in sequence, headed by the highest knave* (the knave of clubs) count as Matadors. The number of such Matadors contained in the hand is added to unity, representing the value of the game. Any Matadors which chance to be found in the "Skat" are counted as though they were in the hand of the Player.

Without Matadors.—If the highest knave is absent, this, plus any others in sequence thereto which may also be absent is added (in the same manner as when the game is *with* Matadors), to the number representing the value of the game; so that, in fact, a game "*without* so many Matadors" reckons exactly the same as a game "*with* the like number of Matadors."

Any Matadors which may chance to be in the "Skat" are taken into account, as above mentioned.†

* The reader is reminded that the four knaves are regarded as forming part of the trump suit for the time being. (See page 18).

† The very singular rule above stated seems to demand a little further explanation. As will have been gathered from the text, the right to score a game as *with* Matadors depends upon the possession of the leading Matador, the knave of Clubs. Holding this card, any others in direct sequence to it, including the cards of the trump suit for the time being (these latter following in order the lowest knave), also become Matadors. Thus, Clubs being trumps, the following would be a hand *with* ten Matadors, and should the seven of Clubs be found in the "Skat," the game would be "*with* eleven" (the highest possible number).



But suppose the knave of Clubs be missing, all the rest cease to be Matadors, when the game would be described (not as "*without any*," but) as "*without one*." Should the knave of Spades be also wanting, the game would be described as "*without two*." Lacking also the knave of Hearts, as "*without three*," and so on; in other words, *without* so many Matadors as may chance to be above the highest trump in the hand. If the highest trump in hand is the ace, the hand will be *without four* (i.e., the four knaves). If the ace also is wanting, and the ten be the highest trump, the hand will be *without five*, and so on.

Should the Player hold the knave of Clubs, but the sequence be interrupted at any lower point, his game is *with* so many Matadors as are in unbroken sequence

C. *The Contingencies of the Game.*

Certain contingencies which may arise are also taken into consideration in fixing the multiplier. These contingencies are of four different degrees or stages, each step counting 1. They are known as—

- a. *Schneider*.*
- b. *Declared Schneider*.
- c. *Schwarz*.†
- d. *Declared Schwarz*.

To the value of the particular degree reached by the Player, those of all the preceding degrees are added. Thus, whoever attains the second stage (*i.e.*, wins a *Schneider* previously declared), counts also the value of the first ($1 + 1 = 2$). A player who reaches the fourth stage (*Schwarz* declared), counts as well the values of the first, second, and third contingencies ($1 + 1 + 1 + 1 = 4$).

First Variation.—Some count double value (*i.e.*, two points) for *Schwarz*, and the like amount for *Declared Schwarz*.

to the knave. Thus, Spades being trumps, a hand as under would be said to be “with *three* Matadors,” the sequence being broken by the absence of the knave of Diamonds.



But should the knave of Diamonds be found in the “Skat,” the game would be “with *eight* Matadors,” the ace, ten, king and queen of Spades now reckoning as such.

So far the arrangement, though a little complicated, is intelligible, but we have sought in vain for any scientific explanation of the rule which makes the possession of the highest Matador a condition precedent to the counting of any of the others, or the still stranger rule which, while making the number of Matadors in unbroken sequence a test of value, ascribes the *same* value to the presence or absence of a given number, so that a game *with* (say) five Matadors is precisely equivalent to a game *without* that number. See note on p. 20.

* Pronounced *Schnider*.

† Pronounced *Schwartz*.

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Second Variation.—Some, again, count one point for each of the first two stages, but two points for the third, and four for the fourth stage.

The following table shows the respective values of *Schneider*, *Declared Schneider*, &c., according to the different methods above mentioned :—

	The Standard game.	Variations.	
1st Step. For Schneider	1	1	1
2nd Step. For Declared Schneider .	1	1	1
3rd Step. For Schwarz	1	2	2
4th Step. For Declared Schwarz .	1	2	4
Total for winning Schwarz, } previously declared	4	6	8

N.B.—No step must be omitted in the counting. A Player who wins *Schwarz*, scores also *Schneider* and *Declared Schneider*. A Player who wins a *Declared Schwarz* scores the value of all the four stages.

THE TOTAL OF THE MULTIPLIER.

The multiplier is, therefore, made up as follows :—

1. Unity, representing the game 1
2. Matadors, ("with-" or "without-") . . . x
3. The contingencies of the game. . . . y^*

$$\text{Total Multiplier } \underline{\underline{1 + x + y = z}}$$

The basis value of the particular game played, multiplied by z , gives therefore the sum total of the points, which the losing party has to pay the winner.

* The actual value of x is, of course, known at the outset of the game, and that of y as soon as the game is completed. The value of z is, therefore, easily ascertainable.

THE SCORE.

ILLUSTRATIVE SCORES OF SOLO GAMES.

(The Standard Game.)

	In Diamonds : with one.		In Spades : with two.		In Clubs : Schwarz with five	
	Multi- plier.	Multi- plicand. 9	Multi- plier.	Multi- plicand. 11	Multi- plier.	Multi- plicand. 12
Basis value * . . .						
The Game . . .	1		1		1	
Matadors . . .	1		2		5	
Schneider . . .					1	
Declared Schneider					1	
Schwarz . . .					1	
	2	9	3	11	9	12
	$2 \times 9 = 18$		$3 \times 11 = 33$		$9 \times 12 = 108$	

VARIATIONS.

Other variations in the manner of reckoning a *Solo* are as under :—(1.) The basis-value is the same as that of *Tourné*, but the multiplier is increased by "one." (2.) *Tourné* and *Solo* are in the first instance reckoned alike, but an addition of 50 per cent. (one half) is made for *Solo*. (Fractions are not reckoned.)

Examples of these different modes of reckoning in the three games above mentioned :—

	Solo in Diamonds : with one.				Solo in Spades : with two.				Solo in Clubs. Schwarz with five.			
	1st Variation.		2nd Variation.		1st Variation.		2nd Variation.		1st Variation.		2nd Variation.	
Basis value . . .		5		5		7		7		8		8
Game . . .	1		1		1		1		1		1	
Matadors . . .	1		1		2		2		5		5	
Schneider . . .									1		1	
„ Declared									1		1	
Schwarz . . .									1		1	
For Solo . . .	1				1				1			
	3	5	2	5	4	7	3	7	10	8	9	8
50 % Addition .	$3 \times 5 = 15$		$2 \times 5 = 10$ Add 5		$4 \times 7 = 28$		$3 \times 7 = 21$ Add 10		$10 \times 8 = 80$		$9 \times 8 = 72$ Add 36	
			15				31				108	

* For the basis values, see Table on p. 41.

A comparison with the mode of reckoning in the Standard Game shows that in the smaller games the Standard method gives the higher scores, the second variation coming next in order. In the games of higher value the Standard scoring gives pretty much the same results as the second variation.

2. VALUATION AND COUNTING OF *GRANDO*.

The total value of a *Grando* is ascertained in the same way as above mentioned, a basis value being multiplied by the sum of (1.) unity, representing the game; (2.) the number of Matadors ("with" or "without"); (3.) the contingencies (*Schneider* and the like).

The basis value is in *Grando Tourne*, 12; in *Grando Solo*, 16; and in *Grando Ouvert*, 24. That is to say, for example, that a *Grando Solo* with two Matadors, the Player making his opponents *Schwarz*, is worth $16 \times (1 + 2 + 3) = 16 \times 6 = 96$.

First Variation.—Where *Tourne* and *Solo* are valued alike, the basis value of *Grando* is always 12.

Second Variation.—In *Grando Solo* the basis value is reckoned as 18 or 24.

Third Variation.—The basis value of a *Grando Tourne* is reckoned as 16, and that of a *Grando Solo* as 20. This last is, however, quite an exceptional mode of reckoning.

3. THE VALUATION OF *NULLO* GAMES.

The question of the valuation and proper rank of the *Nullo* games has provoked equally warm discussion. The *Nullo* games were, as we have seen, only introduced into Skat at a comparatively late period. Although they very soon made good their footing in the game, they are even to this day regarded by one section of Skat players with jealous eyes. This prejudice was counterbalanced by a correspondingly warm reception of the novelty by another section of players. Hence arose various modes of valuation, and consequent

differences of opinion as to the proper order of precedence of the *Nulló* games.

Nulló Tourné counts 16, and *Nulló Solo* 24. *Nulló Ouvert* bears a double value (i.e., *Nulló Tourné Ouvert* is valued at 32, and *Nulló Solo Ouvert* at 48 points). *Nulló Revolution*, or *Grand Nulló Ouvert* (see p. 33), counts 72.

The values attributed to *Null* differ so widely that the need of some uniform rule is nowhere more urgent than in this particular instance. Ordinary *Nulló* is to this day valued in different circles at 12, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, and 32 points, or even higher. *Nulló Ouvert*, as a rule, counts double.

N.B.—One widely prevailing variation is to count *Nulló Tourné* as 16, *Nulló Solo* as 20, *Nulló Ouvert* as 40, and *Revolution* as 60.

The Order of Precedence of the Nulló Games.

For the better understanding of this section, we invite the reader in the first place to make himself acquainted with the "Provocations." (See *post*, p. 50.) In the case of "value" provocations and "combined" provocations, the precedence of *Nulló* becomes a mere question of arithmetic. In the case of "suit" provocations, the simplest and most natural order of precedence for the *Nulló* games is that indicated by the absolute value of each such game.* In relation to this subject the following rules prevail :—

1. A *Nulló* can only be overbidden by a *Solo* game.
2. In overbidding, only the ascertained value of the game as indicated by the hand of the player is taken into consideration.
 - a. Of the *Matadors*, therefore, only such as the player actually has in hand are counted.
 - b. Games without *Matadors* are only reckoned as "without one."
 - c. *Declared Schneider* or *Declared Schwarz*, as bearing recognised values, may be taken into account.

* I.e., irrespective of contingencies, such as *Schneider* or *Schwarz* undeclared.

3. As between two games of equal value, the Elder Hand has the preference.

Bearing these rules in mind, the proper order of precedence for the *Nullo* games is easily ascertainable, and should be settled beforehand, whatever the mode of scoring adopted. The order of precedence in the Standard game, when the provocations are according to suit, is as follows:—The ordinary *Nullo Solo* is on the same footing as a *Solo* in Clubs “*with one*,”* but is superseded by a *Solo* in Diamonds *with two*; or *with* or *without one*, *Schneider* being declared. *Nullo Ouvert* stands on the same level as *Grando with two*, or Club *Solo with three*, but may be overbidden by a Heart *Solo with two*, and *Schneider* declared; by a Heart *Solo with four*, or by a *Grando with three*.

Nullo Revolution stands on the same level as a *Solo* in Clubs *with three*, *Schneider* declared; but is superseded by *Grando with four*, or by a Heart *Solo with three*, and *Schwarz* declared, and so on.

In the case of numerical provocations, the number declared decides the question.

Justification of the Foregoing Rules.

Opinions as to the position to be allotted to the *Nullo* games are, as we have observed, greatly divided. The one party ascribe to them too high, the other too low a value, and these opposite opinions are defended on both sides with great energy. As usually happens, the correct view lies midway between the two extremes. First in order comes the question of the position of the *Nullo* games, where the provocations are by *suit* (see the next section), for in this case only do we get a clear view of the consequences which arise from an improper position being allotted to them.

If on the one hand it must be admitted that a *Nullo*, and particularly a *Nullo Ouvert*, is a game of rare occurrence,

* *I.e.*, = 24 points.

difficult to play, and of more than ordinary interest, due regard must still be paid to the complaints which are loudly raised (where suit provocations prevail), when a really good game and one of higher scoring value is superseded by a *Nullò*, particularly where such *Nullò* has been declared at random as a piece of sharp practice. There are some players who take a perverse delight in declaring *Nullò* with a doubtful hand, simply to spoil good cards in the hands of another. Should such a player fail in making the *Nullò*, he comforts himself with the reflection that he will, after all, scarcely lose so much to both antagonists as he would have had to pay to one singly for a high game. He therefore prefers to risk a doubtful *Nullò*, setting this, small as may be his chance of winning, against the dead certainty of a heavier loss. But even if an exceptionally high game is declared, the remaining cards are often peculiarly placed, and many a player, seeing that one of his opponents has a specially good game, risks the experiment of a *Nullò*, merely to prevent such opponent securing the position of Player. Often too he only provokes in the hope of inciting his adversary to a declaration beyond his strength, and so making the result a matter of uncertainty.

These are inconveniences which require an effectual remedy. Justice may be done on both sides if (as we have done with the approval of many Skat-lovers) we ascribe to *Nullò* a relatively high value, but lay down the rule that it shall, even in suit provocations, be superseded by a game of absolutely higher value.*

We have adopted the method which so determines the value of a *Nullò*, that if declared by the elder hand, it will supersede a *Club Solo with one*, but must give place to a *Diamond Solo with two*, which, contrary to justice, has in the case of suit provocations not hitherto been the case.

* *I.e.*, apart from contingencies, such as the Opponents being made Schneider or Schwarz, without previous declaration.

The Score at Ramsch.

Ramsch scores ten *against* that player who has the largest number of points in the tricks won by him. Should two players have exactly the same number of points, and such number be more than those of the third, they each pay him 10. Should either player have won no trick, or the tricks he has won contain no points, he ranks as a "Maiden." If there is a "Maiden" among the players, the loser pays 15; if there are two "Maidens," 20 points to each.

Variations.—Ramsch is also played with 15 or even 20 points as the single stake. Where there are two losers, the points lost are sometimes divided between them.

Point Ramsch.

The player who, in this form of the game, has the largest number of points, is debited with that number as the measure of his loss. Should two players have in their tricks the same number of points, while the third player has a smaller number, each of the two losers is debited with the number of points held by the winner.

In both forms of Ramsch the "Skat" cards count nothing to either party.

Variation.—Sometimes the number of points in the "Skat" is added to the score of the player who makes the *last* trick.

◆◆◆
"PROVOCATION," OR "BIDDING."

 HE player who declares the highest game is entitled to play. As between two players having equally high games, the elder hand of the two has precedence. The younger hand can only gain the right to play by declaring a higher game, and thereby overbidding the game declared by the elder hand. This bidding, in order to ascertain the highest game, and consequently the right to play, is known as "provocation."

As between any two players, the elder hand is provoked, and the younger "provokes" or "challenges" him. Should one player pass, his right to provoke vests in the player next in succession. The elder hand is the first to be provoked; should he pass, the middle hand steps into his shoes. Should he also pass, the hinder hand may play what game he pleases, or pass also; in which latter case, either a Ramsch is played, or the cards are thrown up, and dealt anew.

The order of provocation is as follows. The elder hand is in the first place provoked by the middle hand. For the elder hand to take the initiative, as is sometimes done, is incorrect, for it is from the information derived from the provocation that the opposing players decide on their course of play, and the elder hand is in such case deprived of a legitimate advantage. The elder hand may remind the middle hand of his duty, and challenge him to fulfil it. The fact of such a challenge does not place the elder hand under any obligation to play. The middle provokes the elder hand, so far as his cards allow, or passes. Should the middle hand "pass," the hinder hand continues the provocation, or passes in like manner.

The player who is thus challenged, answers each question (or provocation) in the affirmative or negative, the latter being equivalent to "passing." The competitor who has undertaken the highest game is called "The Player;" (the other two joining their forces against him). The Player must play either the game he has declared or something higher, but in no case any lower game.

There are several different methods of provoking. We may divide them generally into three classes, viz. :—

1. Provocations according to Suit.
2. Provocations according to Value.
3. Mixed Provocations (*i.e.*, according to Suit and Value combined).

1. PROVOCATIONS ACCORDING TO SUIT.

The player who provokes the next elder hand, naturally begins with the game of lowest value, so that in the event of the game falling to himself, he may have as free a hand as possible. Where the "*Simple Game*" is played, he begins with this, and of course in the lowest suit, viz. Diamonds, followed in succession by Hearts, Spades, and Clubs respectively. Where the *Simple Game* is not played, *Tourné* is the lowest call. Here *Suit* does not come in question, the trump suit being determined by the card which may be turned up. *Tourné* may be overbidden by *Solo* in the lowest suit (diamonds); *Solo* in hearts, *Solo* in spades, *Solo* in clubs, and *Grando* coming next in order. (For *Nullo* and *Nullo Ouvert*, see page 47.)

2. PROVOCATIONS ACCORDING TO VALUE.

Where provocations are made according to suit it often happens that a game in a high suit, though of small value, supersedes a much more valuable game in a lower suit. In order to avoid this anomaly, the numerical values of the games may be taken into consideration instead of their order in point of suit; in other words, "the players bid by value." This is rather more difficult for a beginner, because he has to be acquainted with the exact value of each game; or in other words, he must know what games are equivalent to the number up to which he has provoked.

Where the *Simple Game* is played, the lowest value is 2, but where the players begin with *Tourné*, 10 (in *Tourné* Diamonds *with one Matador*) is the lowest figure. The "provoking" player begins therefore with this figure (2 or 10 as the case may be), and provokes only up to such a point as he thinks his cards will justify. Whoever has bid the largest number, can declare any game of a value as high or higher than the figure to which he has been provoked. If he cannot play so high a game, and throws up his cards, he pays the value he declared. If the Player has declared a given game on his own

hand,* and loses it, he pays the value of the game he declared; but if he plays *Tourné* and wins, but the final result does not amount to the figure he announced, he pays the full value up to which he was provoked, just as though he had lost, although he has in fact won, the game.

He cannot, however, lose more than the number he has announced, and consequently is *not* liable for the amount which, according to the card turned, he would have had to reach, in order to win as much or more than the declared number. The rule, that the Player must pay as much as he attempted to win, does not here apply. This is a point which often leads to dissension, players not considering what extremely hard cases would otherwise arise.

EXAMPLE.—A Player, having two Matadors in his hand, has been provoked to declare 24. He turns up a spade. Now *Tourné* in Spades *with two Matadors* is worth 21 only.† To secure the number which he has declared, he must *Schneider* his opponents. He wins the game, but not the *Schneider*. Must he then pay 28 points, which is the number he would have won had he made the *Schneider*? He pays 24, an adequate penalty, for his game is only worth 21, and he would have been the winner if he had limited his bid to that number. This is not to be confounded with the case of a Player turning up a card which raises his game to a higher value, and his either playing and losing, or throwing up his cards. In such a case he must pay, *not* the amount he bid, but the value of the game as determined by the card turned up.

If a Player has declared a game of a certain amount, he is at liberty to play any game he pleases, provided only that he reaches the figure he declared. It is also at his own option whether to play *Tourné* or *Solo*.

* E.g., a *Solo* or *Grando*.

† See the Table, p. 125.

3. COMBINED PROVOCATIONS.

(COMBINING SUIT AND VALUE.)

The wide discretion as to mode of play which is allowed to the Player by the numerical form of provocation frequently leads, as opponents of this method maintain, to unduly high play, a reproach which, so far as the *Tourné* games are concerned, has a considerable amount of foundation. Hence the introduction of "combined" provocations, which afford a practical and effective solution of the difficulty. The working of these is as follows: Up to *Tourné* inclusive, provoking by number is not admissible; the numerical provocations beginning with *Solo*, that is to say, with the number 18. According to this method the basis value for *Solo* is always 9, 10, 11, or 12,* for *Grando* 16, while *Nullo* counts 24, and *Nullo Ouvert* 48. The numerical provocations only apply to games played upon the cards in hand, so that each player knows exactly how far he can safely go, without trusting to the "Skat." This method appears the better one, for it secures all the advantages of the numerical provocations, and is both simple and clear.

Over-Bidding One's Self.

Before we pass to the practice of the game, it may be desirable to refer to a contingency which is put forward by many players, as a sort of bogey, against the use of numerical provocations. We refer to the possibility of "overbidding" one's self, meaning that where a player, on the strength of high cards in his hand, makes a certain declaration *without* so many Matadors, and at the close of the game finds one of the missing Matadors in the "Skat," it may happen that the

* According to the suit in which the Solo is played. This makes the *actual* value of the Solo game, irrespective of Schneider or Schwarz, 18, 20, 22, or 24. See Table, p. 125.

value of his game, as thus modified,* may not reach the figure he declared. He has over-provoked, *i.e.*, gone too far in provocation, and must debit his score with the total amount of his declaration. But unless declarations are made much too recklessly, the danger is not nearly so great as it may at first sight appear.

Where the Player, holding high cards *without* Matadors, has been provoked into making a high declaration, it is a pretty safe assumption that the adversaries hold the missing Matadors. Should such not be the case, one of them will hold a *Nullo* hand.† The risk, after declaring a high game *without* so many Matadors, of finding one of the missing Matadors in the "Skat" is so small, that in laying down the principles of the game we may entirely disregard it, the more so, that even should such a thing happen, other chances may very well arise to neutralize the danger. Thus, a Player holding a safe game *without two*, may, should the leading Matadors chance to be in the "Skat," *Schneider* his opponents, and so escape the threatened danger.

The surprises of the game of Skat are, as we have stated in our opening chapter, so many and so strange that the bugbear above referred to may be completely ignored. Seeing that a game may be won "*without eleven*" and another lost "*with ten*," the danger of over-provocation is not worth consideration.

* It will be remembered that a game *without* (say) *three* Matadors ranks higher in point of value than a game *without two*, into which the finding of the knave of hearts in the "Skat" would transform it.

† In which case he will naturally bid accordingly, and the subsisting bid in Solo (unless in Clubs) will be superseded.





PART II

A PRACTICAL TREATISE ON
THE GAME.

GENERAL RULES.

THE fundamental rules have for the most part already been given in connection with the various games. We have, however, still to explain the following.

Following Suit and Revoking.

1. To a given card led each player must play one of the same suit if he is able to do so.
2. In all games (*Nullò* only excepted), the four knaves are considered to form part of the trump suit.
3. Should a player revoke (*i.e.*, omit to follow suit when he is able to do so), the game is scored as won by the opposite party, even though it was in fact already lost.
4. The player who is guilty of the revoke pays the cost of the game. Should the Player be the offender, he pays all adversaries. Should one of the Opponents be the guilty party, he pays to the Player the total amount he would have received on winning the game from all the other players.
5. So long as a trick involving a revoke remains unturned, the error may be corrected.

GENERAL RULES.

Recalling a Card.

The taking back of a card played is only allowable under the circumstances last mentioned. In any other case a card once laid on the table is irrevocably played.

Counting or Looking at Tricks once played.

1. A player is only allowed to look at the trick last taken.
2. The trick last taken must at the request of the opposite party be turned up again.
3. In any other case, to look at, or count the points of, the other tricks already made, is only permitted where there has been an express agreement to that effect before the commencement of the game.

Leading out of Turn.

1. Any player leading when not entitled to do so, must take back his card. In such case the other players also take back their cards.

This rule, however, only applies to the first trick of the game, and so long as the trick has not been turned.

2. Should it be discovered during the course or at the conclusion of a game that some player has led out of turn, the error cannot be rectified.

N.B.—In the course of a game (*i.e.*, after the first trick) leading out of turn is a very rare occurrence, and, if done, would at once be noticed.

Looking at the "Skat."

1. Should the Player look at the "Skat" when he has no right to do so, the game is scored to his Opponents. Should either of the Opponents so offend, the game is scored to the Player.
2. Should either player look at the "Skat" before the game begins, he is fined ten points. The cards are in such case thrown up and dealt anew by the same dealer.
3. Should either of the non-active players look at the "Skat," he is fined ten points.

THE GAME OF SKAT.

4. If "*Schneider*" or "*Schwarz*" has been declared, or if the Player, having already won the game he declared, thinks that he can *Schneider* his opponents, the game must at the request of the winner be played out, until *Schneider* or *Schwarz* is decided.*

5. At the game of Skat no one should speak, save when *Null-Revolution* chances to be played. Spectators and non-active players are not permitted to influence the game in any way. A non-active player attempting so to do is fined ten points.

Throwing up the Game.

1. If the Player thinks that he cannot win the game he has declared, he may throw up the game.

2. The Player may even throw up the game after the first trick, but must do so before the second is played. In such case the game he declared is alone scored as lost against him, and he cannot be made *Schneider* or *Schwarz*.

Variation.—In some districts the Player is allowed to throw up the game after the second, third, or even the fourth or fifth trick; but such a licence should not be tolerated.

For further particulars see *post*, tit. *Throwing up the Game*.

RULES OR PRINCIPLES OF PLAY.

HE rules (or principles) of play are not obligatory like those of the game; but inasmuch as they embody results arrived at by practical experience of the game, they constitute maxims which no Skat-player, unless he wishes to be regarded as a "duffer," can afford to disregard.

So long as a player fights at his own risk alone, no one, we admit, has any right to complain, but where two players play against the third, there must be a certain harmony in their

* *I.e.*, the Opponents cannot escape a possible *Schneider* or *Schwarz* by throwing up their cards.

method of play, and such harmony is only rendered possible by strict adherence to accepted rules and principles. No player should claim to set himself above such rules, and to play after a fashion of his own. Should he do so, he generally brings his partner to grief, and a feeling of dissatisfaction is aroused, destroying that cordiality which forms the main condition of a pleasant game. Even should it now and then happen that a departure from rule turns out luckily, the player should not be misled thereby, for exceptions do not confirm a rule, and a single lucky hit will be counterbalanced by innumerable failures. To presume upon a "fluke" is always a dangerous thing, and a sure indication of a weak player.

These rules and principles are divisible into two classes, *i.e.* (1), those for the guidance of the Player, and (2), those for the guidance of the Opponents.

RULES FOR THE PLAYER.

THE REVIEW OF THE HAND AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE GAME TO BE PLAYED.

THE great art of the game is to be able correctly to appraise the value of a hand, and to use it to account accordingly. Recklessly to declare a game which it will be difficult or all but impossible to win, is just as grave a fault, as through ignorance to throw away a safe game, or to declare a less valuable game than the cards justify, without thereby gaining any increased certainty of winning.

There are many games for whose correct valuation practice and experience are necessary, and even skilled players make mistakes in this particular.

EXAMPLE I.

What game would you declare with such a hand as the following?



There are many players who would declare such a hand to be an extremely doubtful *Solo*. The four losing cards are a source of danger which may well discourage even a fairly good player. To declare a *Grando* with such cards would be thought by a novice the height of folly, and yet these cards, *if held by the elder hand*, are a certain *Grando*. (For the proof of this, see Example VI., p. 69.)

The first question which the player must ask himself, is whether his cards are more suitable for a *Tourné* or for a *Solo*. Right judgment in this particular is a rock upon which the beginner only too often splits, particularly where his hand consists of cards in two suits, and two or more knaves. It is accepted as a rule that *an average Solo is generally more easy to win than a Tourné; and an average Grando as easy, if not easier, than a Solo*; but this rule is only correct under special conditions. Three or four losing cards, particularly if of different suits, are generally (as we shall see later on) fatal to a *Solo*. But if, among these probable losers, the player has tens single, or weakly guarded, with such a hand he should most certainly declare *Tourné*.

When to declare Tourné.

1. In order to declare *Tourné*, a player should have a hand about equal in strength to the examples we have given in the first part, page 30.
2. To decide whether a *Tourné* is practicable, when the hand does not include a single knave, requires a very accomplished player.
3. With a hand consisting of two suits, or of a long suit of high cards with small cards in several suits, it is always hazardous to declare *Tourné*, for very often one of the other players has a precisely similar hand in another suit.
4. With a doubtful hand, which appears too weak for a *Solo*, and too risky for a *Tourné*, it is in any case more

advantageous to 'pass,' for such cards in the hands of an Opponent may be very dangerous to the Player. In saying this, we must not be understood by any means to approve the bad habit of passing with a good hand, but only to give a warning against reckless declarations.

5. A hand made up of all four knaves and losing cards in different suits, makes an extremely weak *Tourné*, but is possibly good for a *Nullo*. Beginners should never be tempted by the possession of the four knaves (without other justification); to declare a *Solo* or a *Grando*.

EXAMPLE II.

The Player is tempted by the fact of holding the four knaves, and undertakes to play *Tourné*.



He turns up the Queen of Spades, taking in with it from the "Skat" the Queen of Diamonds, and must lose the game, unless the trumps and high cards in the hands of the other players are distributed in an exceptionally favourable manner.

When to Play a Suit Solo.

1. The player has to consider whether, with an average distribution of trumps and high cards in the other hands, he can secure 61 points.

2. The player should have a distinct preponderance in the suit in which he proposes to play, so as to be enabled to draw or force out the trumps of the enemy.

3. With poor trumps, but high cards in other suits, a player may risk a *Solo*, in the hope of a favourable distribution of the trump suit.

4. With a strong trump hand, the player must be prepared to find that the missing trumps are all in one hand.

5. It should be borne in mind in this connection, that trumps which do not fall to a trump lead, must be forced

THE GAME OF SKAT.

out by leading high cards of other suits; and this is always attended with loss, inasmuch as the Player loses a high scoring card of his own, and the non-trumping adversary is enabled to play a similar card to the trick.*

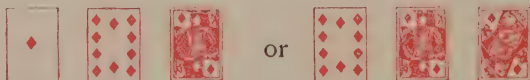
6. A trump sequence without the leading knave, as under,



is more favourable than one in which the second or third knave is wanting, for unless the remaining five trumps are all in one hand, the trick which falls to the best knave may be of small value, whereas if the second or third knave is not drawn pretty early, the trick becomes a valuable one by the Opponents perforce playing high cards to it. If then a player still leads plain suits, the winning of the game becomes an easy matter.

7. You must never assume that there are any trumps in the "Skat," but rather take it for granted that the whole eleven are in play. The observance of this rule will often prevent loss.

8. The safest *Solos* are those where the hand consists of six or seven trumps with a high sequence in some other suit, as—



Should the suit not be in sequence, it is a poor hand for a *Solo*.

9. A *Solo* may also be safely declared with five high trumps and two good plain suits.

10. A *Solo* with seven trumps and three probable losing cards (even though there be kings or queens among them) is of little value, and is rarely won, indeed hardly ever, where the three plain losing cards are, as in the example here given, of different suits.

* Thus adding two good cards to the score of the Opponents.

RULES OF PLAY.



Should such a game be won, the bad play of the Opponents, a very good "Skat," or an exceptionally favourable distribution of the cards, must be credited with the result.

11. Even doubly guarded plain suits from the ten (ten, queen, nine), can only be played successfully if the four other cards of the suit are equally divided, which must by no means be taken for granted.

12. Whether to declare a *Solo* with only four trumps the holder must be guided, as afterwards in the play of the hand, entirely by his strength in plain suits.

13. Where numerical provocations are adopted, a player should be very cautious in declaring a *Solo without* (so many) Matadors, for should either of the missing Matadors chance to be in the "Skat," the Player may easily fail to reach his number, the value of his game being reduced by the Matador found in the "Skat" to a lower figure than that which he declared.

14. Should the Player have a renounce in one or more suits, and his plain suits be so guarded that he is not compelled to lose valuable tricks (*i.e.*, containing many points), his trump suit may be weaker by one trump.

15. Two unguarded tens may cause the loss of a *Solo*, even though the Player have eight Matadors in hand. (*See PROBLEMS.*)

16. With two or three knaves in hand, and two suits in either of which the game might be played, it is more advantageous to make the weaker suit trumps, and to reserve the stronger for forcing purposes.

This should be regarded as a fixed rule whenever the Player is strong in knaves.

EXAMPLE III.

N.B.—P. throughout stands for the Player, A. for the first, and B. for the second Opponent. Of each group of three cards, the one on the

THE GAME OF SKAT.

left represents the card led, the middle one that of the second player, and the one on the right hand that of the third player. The asterisk (*) denotes the winning card. The Roman numerals indicate the number of the trick, and the Arabic numerals the points (if any) therein contained, those preceded by the *plus* sign (+) scoring to the Player, those preceded by the *minus* sign (−) to the Opponents.

The Player's cards are as under :—



He does not, as according to the above rule he should do, declare a *Solo* in Hearts, but gives the preference to the more profitable Club suit.* He loses the game, the conditions being as under.

The elder hand (A.) has—



The second Opponent (B.) has—



and there are in the "Skat"—



The tactics of the Player are very simple, and indeed would be much the same if he chanced to be elder instead of second hand. The Opponents have two suits of which he holds none, and when, therefore, these chance to be led, he must either trump or pass the trick.

* A Solo in clubs is good for 24, while one in hearts scores 18 only.

RULES OF PLAY.

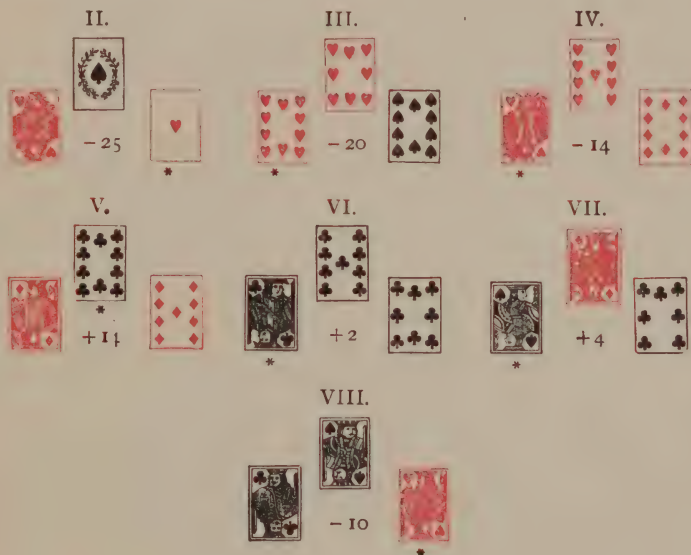
First Method of Play.

(THE PLAYER TRUMPS.)

The Opponent A., elder hand, leads :—



The Player either proceeds to draw trumps (as in Tricks VI. and VII.), and then plays a heart, or leads hearts at once as under :—



The Player has now lost the game, the Opponents having secured 69 points, although the distribution of the cards in point of position was not particularly unfavourable to him.

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Second Method of Play.

(THE PLAYER PASSES THE TRICK WHERE HE CANNOT FOLLOW SUIT.)



The Opponents have thus already in the first three tricks secured 63 points (two more than is necessary to defeat the Player), and have still two more tricks to take with the third knave and the king of hearts respectively.

A *Solo* in hearts, on the other hand, could have been won under any circumstances, however the Opponents' cards were distributed.

When to Play a Grando.

1. The decision whether to play a *Grando* is comparatively speaking a matter of little difficulty; for it is easy to reckon how many tricks must fall to the Opponents, and how many points they will contain.

2. The stronger the trump sequence is, the weaker may the plain cards be. With four knaves a *Grando* can be won with poor cards in other suits.

3. With four knaves and five cards (from the ten downwards) of a plain suit, and one losing card, a *Grando* may be regarded as a certainty. A similar *Grando* may be played even without a ten in the long suit, or with an unguarded ten as the losing card.



4. With three knaves only, the plain suits must be a little stronger, but one head sequence is enough.

5. With knave of clubs and one of the minor knaves, the Player should be strong in *two* plain suits.

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6. Having neither of the two best knaves, the Player should have at least three strong plain suits, each headed by ace, for he must be prepared to find that the knaves he holds are drawn by the adversaries.

7. Having the senior knave alone, in like manner, three sequences in plain suits are necessary.

8. To play *Grando without four Matadors* (i.e., holding no knave), you should have all four aces, and at least two tens.

9. With three aces, the corresponding tens, and the fourth ten well guarded, a "*Grando without four*" may also be played.

10. A *Grando without Matadors*, or with two knaves not in sequence, even with an apparently good hand, is always a risky matter. How hazardous such a *Grando* may be, will be seen from the following examples:—

EXAMPLE IV.

Grando without Matadors.

The Player (elder hand) holds cards as under:—



He declares *Grando*; but should the cards of the Opponents happen to be unfavourably placed, he may even be made *Schwarz*. Say, for example, Opponent A. has



and Opponent B. has



The Player leads a club. B. trumps with one of his knaves, and leads spades.

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A. trumps, and leads clubs. B. trumps, and again leads spades.

A. trumps, and leads in succession his three remaining clubs; upon which B. throws away his two hearts.

A. then plays diamonds. B. takes the trick with the ace, and plays his remaining spades.

The Player has not made a single trick, and is therefore *Schwarz*.

EXAMPLE V.

Grando with two knaves, not in sequence.

The Player (second hand) holds cards as under :—



On taking up the cards, those of the Opponents are found to be distributed as under :—

A. (elder hand) has



B. (third hand) has



The Course of Play.



RULES OF PLAY.

The trumps are exhausted. The elder hand has the lead, and holds all the remaining hearts—six in number. The Player is therefore made *Schwarz*.

11. In all *Grando* games the position of elder hand gives an advantage not to be lightly estimated, because the Player need not weaken his hand by “trumping,” but can at once proceed to draw the trumps, and eventually establish a long suit.

12. There are some *Grando* games which are *only* safe where the Player is elder hand. (*See post*, DECLARATIONS BY ELDER, SECOND, AND HINDER HAND respectively.) The following is an example of a certain *Grando*, if only the Player be elder hand :—

EXAMPLE VI.

(*See Example I.*)



Proof of the Assertion made on page 60.—The Player, being elder hand, makes six tricks in succession.* He has thereby gained possession of *twelve* cards from the Opponents, making, with the two in the “Skat,” *fourteen*. Now there are in the pack only *twelve* cards of no scoring value, of which the Player himself holds four. He has therefore won, in addition to his own hand, eight non-scoring and six scoring cards.†

These six cards are the two knaves (= 4 points) and *at least* four queens (the cards of next lowest scoring value) = 12. To these must be added the points of the Player’s own cards, 46. $46 + 16 = 62$ points.

* With his two knaves, and the aces and tens of clubs and diamonds.

† This is on the lowest computation. The number of scoring cards cannot be less than six, but if the suits are unequally divided in the hands of the Opponents, it may be considerably greater, the number of non-scoring cards being proportionately lessened.

The Player is certain, therefore, to make by the first six tricks 62 points.

The result is materially affected should the Player, instead of either of the four non-scoring cards, hold another scoring card (knave, of course, excepted), were it only a queen. In such a case he might possibly have among the fourteen *nine* non-scoring cards, and so lose the game.

Every point among the losing cards weakens the hand ; an additional knave, on the contrary, strengthens it, so that the Player may be safe for a *Grando*, even though he be not elder hand.

The cards above mentioned may even in the hinder hand be regarded as good for a *Grando*, should the two other players have passed. Even with the knave of diamonds in place of that of spades, a *Grando* might be risked by the elder or hinder hand.

When to play a Grando Tourné.

For *Grando Tourné* much the same rules prevail as for the judgment of a *Grando* ; but in this case the Player has this great advantage, that he can by the discard relieve his hand of two losing cards. On the other hand, he often finds himself in a "fix," by reason of the suit turned up not suiting his hand, so that it requires considerable audacity to declare a *Grando Tourné*. Herein, indeed, lurk many dangers. A hand weak in knaves and with only two strong plain suits is especially risky.

When to play Nullo or Nullo Ouvert.

1. In deciding whether to play *Nullo*, the player should stand fast by this rule, that his cards must include at least three sevens.

2. With a single dangerous card a *Nullo* should only be risked, if the player has one suit wholly wanting.

3. With an unguarded nine a player may declare *Nullo*, but in such case he should, being elder hand, lead the nine, at the risk of at once winning the first trick.

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4. King, knave, nine and seven do not necessarily win a trick, for the Player can always "dodge" the intermediate cards.

5. Should the Player hold queen instead of knave, he may be forced to win a trick, should eight, ten, and knave be in the same hand.

6. Should the seven be lacking in a long suit, the *Nullò* will as a rule be lost.

7. In a short suit the seven may be lacking, provided that the eight and nine form part of the hand.

8. To win a *Nullò Ouvert*, the Player *must* hold the seven of every suit he has in hand.

9. With an eight single, a *Nullò Ouvert* may be declared if the Player be elder hand.

10. With a nine single, a *Nullò Ouvert* is very hazardous even for the elder hand.

11. In playing *Nullò* it should never be forgotten that there are eight cards in each suit.*

DECLARATIONS BY ELDER, MIDDLE AND HINDER HANDS RESPECTIVELY.

To play a game successfully is more difficult for the middle than for the elder or hinder hand. As we have already seen (page 69) there are games which are absolute certainties for the elder hand, but become doubtful in the case of middle or hinder hand.

In general the elder hand has an advantage in all games In *Nullò* alone is the contrary rather the case.

EXAMPLE VII.

The Player is second hand and declares a *Solo* in clubs, and *Schwarz* ; as being more valuable than *Grando* "with three."

* Herein differing from *Solo*, *Tourné*, &c., wherein the trump suit has eleven cards, and each plain suit seven only.

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If the Player were elder hand the game would be a certainty. Being second hand, not only may the Player fail to make his opponents *Schwarz*, but may even fail to win the *Solo* at all.

Course of Play.

The elder hand leads, say, the ten of spades; the Player (second hand) plays the ace of spades. Hinder hand trumps with the ace of clubs, and leads the ten of hearts, which the elder hand trumps with the ten of clubs, the Player playing the ace. Total (won by the Opponents), 63 points.

2. THE DISCARD.

By "the discard" is signified the throwing out of two cards, in exchange for those of the "Skat," taken into the hand. It can therefore only occur in those games wherein the "Skat" is directly used.

The following are the rules to be observed in reference to the discard :—

1. The Player should endeavour to create for himself by means of the discard as nearly as he can a "close" hand,* and "renounces" in the suits of which he is short, so as to be able to trump cards of high numerical value in such suits.

2. The Player should discard cards of the highest scoring value possible, not parting however with any card which is a safe trick-winner.

3. The Player should throw out for the most part cards of plain suits, especially tens single or singly guarded. Cases however may occur, in which it is advantageous to discard trumps, especially where you have no prospect of making the ace or ten, or of trumping with them.

* *I.e.*, consisting of unbroken sequences.

RULES OF PLAY.

EXAMPLE VIII.

The Player holds cards as below :—



He turns up in the “Skat” the ace of diamonds (which suit thereby becomes trumps), and the king of hearts. What should he throw out? Answer, the ace and ten of trumps.*

4. An ace single is not, as a rule, discarded.

5. With a strong plain suit, including ace and ten, the ace is thrown out if the Player is too weak in trumps to establish his long suit, and therefore cannot reckon on making both ace and ten.

6. Holding ace, ten, king, and a small card of a plain suit, the ten may be discarded, as the king is thereby promoted a step, and the adversary who is short of the suit, generally “passes” king played, or even, being second player, “swarms” on it a scoring card, in the hope that the ten may be in the hand of the last player.

7. If, however, in place of the king you have a small card, you retain the ten, in order to be able therewith to draw a dangerous trump. An exception should be made when the hand is a weak one, consisting mainly of plain cards. In this case it is desirable by means of the discard to place in safety as many points as possible.

8. Weakly guarded tens should be discarded, and worthless cards retained in preference, in the hope of being able to throw these away to the tricks of the Opponents.

9. From a closed plain-suit sequence, as ace, ten, king, queen, you throw away ace and ten, unless by some other mode of discard you gain a *renounce*.*

10. Ten and king of one suit, without other cards in

* As they would otherwise inevitably fall to knaves led, and so be scored by the Opponents.

sequence, should only be discarded if the Player can find no more satisfactory plan of discarding.

11. With an ace singly guarded (otherwise than by the ten), the smaller card is discarded, on the chance of being thereby enabled to trump the ten.

The foregoing rules do not, we must admit, hold good for all contingencies; obedience to them will however be found a material assistance in the most frequently recurring difficulties of the game. Above all let the Player refrain from experiments wherein he runs counter to all rules, as where he retains cards with the sole object of "nipping"*; or holds back an unguarded ten, on the chance of the Opponents leading a small card of that suit. Such pieces of foolhardiness may now and then succeed, but in the long run will cause the Player who is so foolish as to attempt them to lose both his money and his reputation as a Skat-player.

3. HOW TO PLAY.

a. When the Player is Elder Hand.

1. The first and most important rule for the Player is TRUMPS ARE THE SOUL OF THE GAME. *Ergo*, OUT WITH YOUR TRUMPS!

The Player should, with few exceptions, act constantly on this principle, and lead trumps as long as possible. Not till the trumps are out do the winning cards of his plain suits acquire their proper trick-making value, for until then they are never safe from being trumped by the opponents.

2. Even if the Player is weak in trumps, he should still lead them, not merely for the purpose of drawing the adverse trumps, but of concealing his own weakness. If the Player has led trumps, the adversaries will rarely continue the same suit, but if he himself does not lead them, his Opponents will to a certainty do so, which is far more dangerous to him.

* See *post*, p. 103.

RULES OF PLAY.

3. Should the Player have a bare plain suit hand, without or almost without trumps, or should he have turned up an unfavourable suit, then and then only, he should endeavour in the first instance to make his plain suit cards, in the hope that his small trumps may make tricks afterwards.

4. Should one of the Opponents hold so strong a trump hand that there seems a prospect of losing the game through the second Opponent's swarming scoring cards on his tricks, the Player should no longer lead trumps, but should lead his best plain suit cards, in order either to make these, or to compel the strong trump hand to trump them, and so weaken him.

5. With a weak trump hand the Player should endeavour, if possible, to be hinder hand.

6. Holding the two best knaves, without ace or ten, the Player should lead trumps from the highest downwards, even though he has but three trumps besides the two Matadors. Should the six other trumps be equally divided between the Opponents, the third trump led will draw the two last. If there are four in one hand and two in another, the two in the one hand will necessarily fall, and these may include the high scoring cards (the ten and ace).

7. Should the Player hold, with the two best knaves, ace, ten, and a small one, he should lead out the two knaves and then the small one.

8. With two knaves (even though they be the two best) and ace and ten, but no more, he should only lead trumps, if he has strong plain cards. Lacking such, he should reserve his two scoring trumps in the hope of making tricks with them.

9. With the best knave only, the Player, holding the scoring cards (ace and ten) of the trump suit, should lead a small card of that suit.

10. With three knaves, not including the knave of clubs, the Player should lead the knaves, from his best downwards, whatever other trumps he may have in his hand.

11. Holding the two inferior knaves, with ace, ten, and

small cards, the Player should lead out the knaves, and continue with small trumps until his remaining trumps have gained the command.

12. If the Player holds neither a head sequence in a plain suit, nor the scoring cards (ace and ten) of the trump suit and feels bound to get out trumps, it is much the same whether he leads a high trump or a low one; but in most cases the lead of a low card is to be recommended. Care is, however, needed, not to run too short of trumps, or the Player may have no chance of making his high plain cards.

13. When once the trumps of the Opponents are drawn, the only case in which the trump lead should be continued is where there is a possibility of making a *Schneider* or *Schwarz*; for the Opponents are thereby placed in a dilemma, and may throw away a wrong card, *i.e.*, the winning card of a suit in which the Player holds a losing card.

14. With an unbroken plain suit sequence (as ace, ten, king, queen), the lead should always be from the highest card.

15. With a long plain suit, but not in sequence (as ace, king, nine, eight, seven), the lead is in like manner from the highest, the Player hoping that the few intermediate cards of the suit will fall.

16. A short plain suit not in sequence, as ace, king, eight, should be led from with reluctance, inasmuch as it may help the Opponents to a "nip." If you are compelled to lead from such a suit, the small card should be led, for it must not be assumed that the ten is single in either hand. By so leading, ace and king may make two tricks, which unless the ten fell, would be impossible.

17. With ten, king, you should lead the ten. The king then makes a certain trick.

18. Ten and a small card should only be led when the Player has no other card left. In such case lead the small one.

19. With a strong hand the Player should get rid of his losing cards pretty early, lest at a later stage, when one or other of the adversaries has established a renounce, the other may swarm scoring cards upon them.

b. When the Player is Second or Third Hand.

The position of elder hand always gives the Player a certain advantage. He can adopt the plan of attack which will best suit his hand, finding in the principles above laid down finger-posts to guide him to a correct conclusion. But when he is second or third hand, his position is materially altered. He must now, besides the rules above given him, take into account a variety of special considerations; some even of a subjective kind, such as the habitual line of play of a particular opponent. It will here perhaps be better to fall back upon actual experience, and give practical illustrations of cases arising in play.

In general, the rules following should be carefully followed.

1. The Player should always strive to get the lead as early as possible.

2. The Player being second hand, should a plain suit in which he is strong be led to him, he should win the trick rather than play a small card to it.

3. So long, however, as there are trumps still in play, he should not take the trick with a card of high scoring value, but cover with the lowest card which will secure it.

EXAMPLE IX.

The Player (second hand) has declared *Grando*, holding the following cards:—



The elder hand leads diamonds. What card should the Player play?

THE GAME OF SKAT.

Answer.—The Player should take with the *king*. It would be a grave mistake for second hand to take with the ace, for it is by no means improbable that the third hand may have no diamond, and may trump the ace with the missing knave (the knave of diamonds), whereas the king secures the trick,* and at a later stage, after the knave has been drawn, the ace and ten may be played without danger.

4. If, on the contrary, it is needful to draw a high trump which remains in the hand of the third player, and if the Player fears to lead trumps lest he should in consequence run short of them, then a high-scoring plain suit card should be played, in order to induce the Opponent to trump.

EXAMPLE X.

The Player (elder hand) provoked by second hand, has declared *Grando*, with the cards following :—



The Player leads the knave of spades. The second hand plays the knave of diamonds, third hand throws away (any card). The Player now leads the queen of hearts. The ace is played upon it, and the hinder hand leads diamonds. What should the Player play?

Answer.—He should play the ace of diamonds, in the hope of drawing the knave of clubs. Should this card not fall, he continues to lead diamonds (from his highest downwards) and then hearts, in like manner, until the highest trump is drawn, and he himself is left with the final trump (the knave of hearts).

5. The Player being weak in trumps, and a suit being led

* The knave of diamonds, it must be remembered, no longer belongs to the diamond suit, but is regarded simply as a trump. If king be played instead of ace, the liability of the trick to be trumped remains the same, but it would no longer be worth the while of the third player to play his only trump upon it.

by elder hand of which he has none ; should the card played be one of low scoring value, he should play on it a trump of scoring value, so as either to induce the hinder hand Opponent to play a knave, or to secure for himself the points of the scoring card. If, on the other hand, the card led is an ace or a ten, then he should play the smallest trump large enough to draw the knave. Whether the Player should in general trump or throw away the trick, is a question which will be dealt with later.

6. The most advantageous position for the Player (as between second or third hand) is hinder hand, inasmuch as in each trick he plays, as it were, against exposed cards of the Opponents, and can so economise his own cards, as often to capture the high cards of his opponents. (As to NIPPING, *see post.*) The Player as hinder hand will often succeed in making weakly-guarded, or even singleton tens : or by the judicious throwing away of losing cards, in winning a weak game.



RULES OF PLAY FOR THE OPPONENTS.



HE play of the opponents is the most difficult problem of Skat. The number of absolutely certain hands being very small indeed, and apparently safe games being often lost, while on the other hand the very worst (to all appearance) are now and then won, the problem is in what manner the Opponents, by using to advantage every chance which offers itself to them, may best beat the Player ; that is, make him lose the game he has undertaken to win. The task of the adversaries is the harder, because the indications to guide them in judging their cards and making the best of their chances are for the most part very slender. It is in his play as an Opponent that the really fine Skat-player shows his skill, and the number of such players being very limited, by far the larger number of games is won through defective play, and often indeed through gross blunders, on

the part of the Opponents. The difficulty lies in this, that only very few fixed rules can be laid down for the guidance of players in opposition, and of these some are still warmly disputed. Often indeed the very opposite is asserted by one party to what another party puts forward as the proper rule.

The principal rules may be summarised as under :—

1. The Player must be weakened in trumps by every available means, so that he may be left short of the trump suits, and so be unable to draw the trumps of the Opponents ; and on the other hand he may be compelled to lead his plain suits to their trumping.
2. In order to weaken the Player in trumps, Opponents should lead him plain suits which he will feel bound to trump, and to that end they should not spare high-scoring cards, lest he should pass the trick, and throw away a worthless card. The second Opponent should co-operate by "swarming" on the trick a scoring card of medium or even high value, so that a trick which fails to draw a trump from the Player, may at any rate bring in points for the Opponents.
3. If the ace and ten of a given suit have been played, that suit should not again be led by the elder hand, unless the second Opponent has a renounce in it.
4. If the Player also has a renounce, that trick should not again be led, unless the Player is second hand, *or* the second Opponent can by swarming high cards compel the Player to trump, *or* the Opponents require only a few points to secure the game, and the leader hopes to make the required number by inducing the Player to pass a trick containing but few points.
5. When the Player is second hand, a trump lead is least likely to turn out unfavourably for the Opponents.
6. The elder hand should without hesitation lead trumps, if his own are few and small, and he holds neither knave, or can fairly hope by drawing trumps to establish a suit.

RULES OF PLAY.

7. Unless the Player (second hand) has a strong trump hand, a lead of trumps by the elder hand almost always places him in a dilemma. A trump lead is especially effective in the case of a Tourné game. A weak game is almost always lost by the Player if he is compelled to play trumps second hand.

EXAMPLE XI.

The Player has turned up the ten of clubs, and taken in with it the queen of clubs. After discarding the ten of spades and ten of diamonds, he holds the cards following :—



The Player (second hand) is made *Schwarz*. How were the other cards played?

Answer.

The elder hand has—

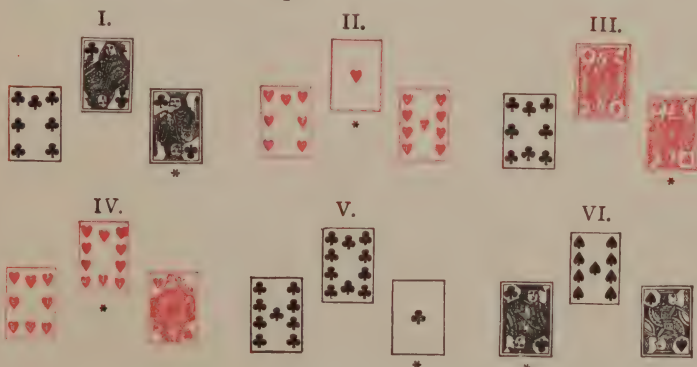


The hinder hand has—



The Play.

Elder hand leads trumps :—



The hinder hand now plays his winning diamonds, and the Player does not make a single trick.

8. This example at the same time serves as an illustration of rules previously laid down. In the first place it conveys a warning not to attempt *Tourné* with two plain suits and little strength in knaves, and proves that a weak *Solo* is generally more easy to win than a bad *Tourné*. Under the same conditions a *Solo* in Spades would have been won.

9. Should, however, either of the Opponents have the command of the trump suit, he should not lead trumps, but wait till they are led by the Player himself, or by the second Opponent through the Player.

10. Should the Player show a disposition to reserve his trumps for the making of plain suit tricks, the Opponent on his right hand should at once lead trumps.

11. In no case should the Opponent to the left of the Player be induced, by a feeling of annoyance that his partner does not draw the Player's trumps, to lead them himself.

12. The Player being second hand, should the Opponent on his right hold the ace or ten of trumps single, and a long suit without any single plain suit card (which is a hand not favourable for an Opponent), it is often very advantageous to lead the single trump. This should be done without hesitation, if the Player shows an inclination to use his trumps for winning plain suit tricks.

The Reason of the foregoing Rule.—The trump ace or ten single can only be made if the holder obtains a *renounce*, or if the Player leads a small trump. The former is an uncertain contingency, and the latter, as we have already seen, only occurs where the Player has a weak hand, and no closed plain suit sequence. If the Player does not hold the best knave, the lead of a high trump card will always place him in a difficulty, and it may be safely assumed that the advantage

thereby gained does more to bring the game to a successful issue, than if the card snatched a trick.

13. The Opponents should always endeavour to put the Player in the position of second hand.

N.B.—This rule, which is far too little regarded, is of the greatest importance. To this end, the Opponent playing second will often head a trick which would otherwise belong to his partner (elder hand), and conversely, the hinder hand will pass the trick, in order to leave the lead with his partner (the elder hand).

14. Should the elder hand think it desirable to lead a plain suit, he should do so (as against Player second hand) from his *longest* suit, and unless the course of the game gives some indication to the contrary (*see ante*, par. 3), should continue the same suit whenever it is again his turn to lead.

Reason of the foregoing Rule.—If the elder hand has four cards of any one plain suit, the other three cards* must as a matter of course either be all in one hand, or divided. In the first case the player who has a *renounce* will naturally trump, and whether this be the Player or the leader's partner, the result is equally advantageous to the game of the Opponents. The Player is thereby weakened in trumps; and the second Opponent can either over-trump the trick, swarm a scoring card upon it, or throw away an inconvenient card. Should the remaining cards of the suit be divided, the same favourable situation is produced by continuing to lead it.

15. In *Solo* Games the lead should usually be from the highest card; in *Tourné* from the highest in the case of closed sequences; otherwise an intermediate card.

16. Holding two equally long suits, neither of which includes the ace, but one of which begins with the ten, the first lead should be a small card of the "ten" suit, so as if possible to clear the way for the ten. The Player, in order to secure

* The reader is reminded that at Skat each plain suit consists of seven cards only, the knave being regarded as belonging to the trump suit.

the lead, will take the trick with the ace. At a later stage of the game, a suit headed by ten should not be led from.

17. As to the play of the elder hand, when the Player is third hand, the opinions of Skat experts are divided. One party advocates the lead of a singleton (or from the shortest suit), while another is dead against such a lead. Either view may be right ; and either may be wrong. In the first place, the two cardinal principles, *vis.* "to seek to weaken the Player in trumps," and "not to lead from his long suit," are to be kept in mind. As a rule, the lead is from the short suit. If an Opponent has discovered from the course of the "provoking" which is the strong suit of his partner, he should lead this, of which he himself is pretty sure to have but few cards. But if an Opponent holds a good trump hand with a long plain suit, and desires to weaken the Player in trumps, he should lead the long suit ; if possible, first ace, and then the ten.

18. The lead of a suit in which your partner has shown that he has a *renounce* should always be continued.

19. One of the most hazardous positions for the Player is where the Opponents are able to establish a "see-saw," *i.e.*, when each has a long suit and a *renounce* in another suit, so that the one player keeps on trumping the suit led by his partner, and then leads his own long suit for his partner to trump and again secure the lead. This is a state of things in which the safest-looking game may often be lost. The Player never takes a trick. His Opponents do as they please with him, and trump his plain suits until his whole strength is exhausted.

20. In playing to a trump lead the following rule prevails : On a knave a knave should be played. There are, however, exceptions, as, for instance, where one of the Opponents has a strong trump hand, wherewith he hopes to exhaust the Player.

21. On an unguarded ten played by the one Opponent the other should, in the case of a *Tourné* game, play the ace as a matter of course ; but in the case of a *Solo* only when he

holds the king also, or can calculate that there is only one card of the suit left.

22. Should your partner at the beginning of a game play the ace of a suit in which you have a *renounce*, high-scoring cards of another suit should only be swarmed upon it, if you hold ace and ten, or ten alone, amply protected; otherwise you should throw away from your shortest suit, first scoring cards and then worthless cards, but never a scantily protected ace of a suit which has not yet been led.

23. Should the Player lead the ace of a suit in which you have a *renounce*, you should always trump, unless you can throw away a singleton (thereby creating a *renounce* in another suit).

24. Having a *renounce*, and desiring to throw away a card of a suit of which you hold several, first throw away the highest, so as not to mislead your partner.

25. Should the Player lead the knave of clubs and knave of spades in succession, an Opponent holding the knave of diamonds doubly protected, should without hesitation, if third hand, play it at once; if second hand, on the second round.

Reason of the foregoing Rule.—Should the Player hold also the knave of hearts, the knave of diamonds will of necessity fall at the third lead; but should your partner hold the knave of hearts, with ace and a small card of the trump suit, the fall of the fourth knave enables him to save his ace. In such case he plays his knave of hearts to the second lead, when his ace becomes the best trump.

26. Should your partner lead a suit of which the ace has, but the ten has not been played, you should always play king or queen upon it.

27. Where (in the case of a *Grando*) the Player leads trumps, and you have the knave of clubs, one of the two inferior knaves, and a good plain suit, you should not take the trick, but play the inferior knave upon it. Should you

THE GAME OF SKAT.

succeed in drawing the last knave of the Player, or in compelling him to trump, he will almost always lose the game.

EXAMPLE XII.

See Example X., wherein the hand of the Player was given as follows :—



As there stated, the player, having declared *Grando*, leads the knave of spades and the knave of diamonds is played to it. The second hand holds cards as under :—



Was second hand right in playing as above ?

Answer.—Second hand does not take with the knave of clubs, for as soon as clubs are led (and he thereby gains the lead), he draws the Player's last trump, and makes his five spades.

28. The other Opponent in such a case whenever he has the lead should endeavour, by leading his long suit from the highest downwards, to enable his partner to over-trump the Player's remaining knave. He should never lead a suit in which his partner has a *renounce*, as the latter would thereby be placed in a difficulty, whether or not to trump the trick.

THE PLAY OF PLAYER AND OPPO- NENTS IN THE VARIOUS GAMES.

IN the preceding section the most important of the general rules bearing on the play of Player and Opponents have been already dealt with. We shall therefore, in discussing the particular games, assume knowledge of

the general rules, and confine ourselves to points to be especially borne in mind in particular cases.

I. THE SIMPLE GAME AND TOURNÉ.

Player and Opponents.

The Player, both in the *Simple game* and in *Tourné*, has twelve cards, of which he lays aside two, retaining ten in hand. (As to the principles of the discard, *see* p. 72.) The Player must bear in mind what cards he has discarded, for these often have a material influence over the course of the game. The Opponents must be prepared to find that the Player has, by means of his discard, established a *renounce*. This should make the leader cautious, though not uneasy. The rules bearing on the case have already been given. The leading of worthless cards, and so giving the opposite party an opportunity to throw away upon them, is always a grave error. With a long suit, including ace and ten, it is permissible, if the Player be second hand, to play king or queen.

2. SOLO GAMES.

a. Suit Solos.

THE PLAYER.

1. The Player should in a *Solo* never reckon upon the "Skat" cards, but frame his line of play on the assumption that all the eleven trumps are divided between the three hands.

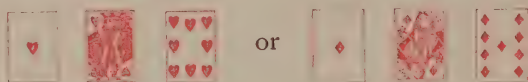
2. *Leading trumps is the essence of Skat play.*

3. Even with a weak trump hand the Player should never neglect this: as he thereby keeps his weakness concealed as long as possible from the Opponents, and is the better enabled to parry their attack.

4. The Player should especially endeavour, by playing high trumps, to get the lead as quickly as possible into his own hands; and so long as there are any trumps still outstanding, should make no attempt at "Nipping." (For the exceptions to this rule, *see* NIPPING.)

5. When leading trumps, the Player should take particular notice what cards fall, so as to be enabled to lead the proper card at a later stage. Suppose, for instance, that he holds ace, ten, and nine of hearts, and the adversaries the knave of diamonds and the eight of hearts, while the superior knaves and the king and queen of hearts have been already played, the nine in such case will suffice to draw the knave. But if one of the Opponents has the nine, and the Player the eight, the latter by leading the eight would lose two tricks. In this case he must sacrifice his ten, in order to draw the knave. This rule, indeed, would appear a matter of course, but it is too often overlooked by beginners.

6. When all the trumps of the Opponents are exhausted, if the Player is left with a plain suit not in unbroken sequence (as under), which he is compelled to lead, he should do so with a small card thereof.



The Opponents must make haste to place their scoring cards in safety, and for that reason will play in the one case the ten, and in the other the king. If they do not do this, but take with a small card, the Player should endeavour if possible to throw away his king or queen (as the case may be), so as ultimately to catch the ten.

7. If the Player, after the trumps of the adversaries are exhausted, is left with two plain suits, the one consisting of a guarded ace, and the other of a losing card without ace, he should play the losing card, as he will then perhaps still have an opportunity of using his guarded ace to secure points with.

8. In order to win a *Solo* when part of the hand consists of losing cards, the Player must understand when and how to throw away. The weakest game may now and then be won by the judicious throwing away of a card. (*See post*, THE FINESSES OF THE GAME.)

PLAY IN VARIOUS GAMES.

THE PLAY OF THE OPPONENTS.

Of ten declared *Solos*, nine have a weak point in the shape of losing cards.* These weak points must be taken advantage of by the Opponents constantly bringing new suits into play. They seek by this means to prevent the Player throwing away cards.† A trick on which the Player throws away should make amends for the injury thereby done to Opponents, by adding a substantial number of points to their score. If due attention is not paid to this, the Player may by a single slip on the part of his adversaries secure the game. The Opponents should seek to throw the lead as often as possible into the hand of the Player. The tricks in a secondary suit, on which the Player had counted, often shrink down to very small proportions if he himself is compelled to lead it. At all events, the Opponents can in such a case always save a guarded ten.

In a *Solo* game an Opponent should lead the ace of a long suit, or the Player may be enabled to make an unguarded ten, which he would otherwise have lost. Even should the Player's ten be guarded, it is not unlikely that the second opponent may be able to take it with a trump on the second round.

b. Grando.

THE PLAYER.

1. As in *Grando* the four knaves are the only trumps, and after these the result depends on the plain suits, *Grando* is the easiest game wherein to estimate the chances of success.

2. "*Get trumps out*" is in this case also an accepted maxim.

3. In declaring a *Grando* this principle should prevail: the

* In *Solo*, it will be remembered, the hand is played as it stands, and the Player has no opportunity of relieving his hand of inconvenient cards. As to the value of such opportunity, and the desirability of so discarding as to secure a *renounce*, see page 72.

† And so securing a *renounce*.

stronger the trumps, the weaker may the plain suits be, and *vice versâ*. This consideration will materially influence the tactics of the Player.

4. If either of the Opponents has "provoked" the Player up to a *Suit Solo*, so that it may be taken for granted that he will have a strong suit with one or more knaves to contend with, extra circumspection will be necessary on the part of the Player, particularly as to the leading of trumps.

5. If, on the other hand, both Opponents have "passed" from the outset, the Player need not expect to find any very strong hand against him, unless, indeed, his Opponents are notoriously timid players.

6. The Player in a *Grando* should always endeavour to draw the knaves, and to that end should lead trumps, even though he himself holds but one. For, to justify his declaring *Grando* with one knave only (particularly if such one be not the knave of clubs) he must hold proportionately strong cards in plain suits. In such case by leading trumps he will save a trick, unless the remaining knaves lie all in one hand.

7. The knaves not being yet out, the Player should do his utmost to discover in whose hand the master-knave lies. It is often of the greatest importance to know which of the Opponents has the last knave. This must be duly taken into consideration before the Player decides whether to lead trumps, or first to weaken the enemy by compelling him to trump a high plain card.

EXAMPLE XIII.

The elder hand passes. The hinder hand has provoked as far as *Tourné*. The middle hand accepts the challenge and declares *Grando*; the cards being as under.

The Player holds—



PLAY IN VARIOUS GAMES.

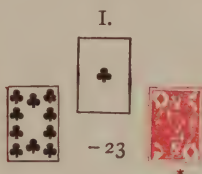
The elder hand has—



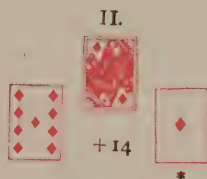
The hinder hand has—



The elder hand leads the best of his long suit (clubs); thus :—



Hinder hand, having won the trick, leads Diamonds.



The Player now has the lead. What should he play?

Answer.—From the first trick it is obvious (to the Player) that the elder hand holds the whole of the club suit. It now becomes the question, where are the two remaining knaves? The ace of clubs having been trumped, if they are both in one hand, the game is pretty certainly lost. If they are divided, and the master knave is with the elder hand, the game is equally lost, and *Schneider* threatened. If the master knave is in the hinder hand, the game can only be won by drawing the trumps. The sole chance of success is, therefore, to lead trumps.

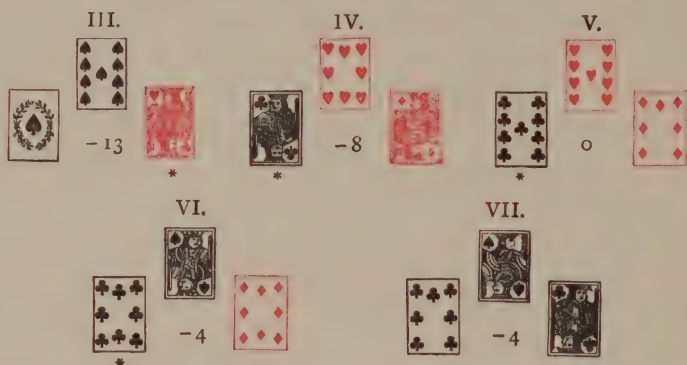
First Method of Play. Trump Led.



THE GAME OF SKAT.

Whatever suit hinder hand may now lead, the Player wins the game, for hinder hand has no clubs.

Second Method of Play. Plain Suit Led.



The three remaining tricks fall to hinder hand. The game is lost, and the Player *Schneidered*, the Opponents having secured 103 points, while he has 14 only.

Exception.—Holding the second and fourth knaves and strong plain cards, the Player in *Grando* should never lead trumps, if either of the Opponents has by provoking to a high point indicated that he has a strong plain suit.

EXAMPLE XIV.

The Player is elder hand. The middle hand has declared a *Solo* in Spades (value 22). The Player, holding the following cards, has overbidden him with *Grando* :—



What should the Player lead ?

The second hand having declared up to *Solo*, it may be conjectured that he holds the other two knaves and a long suit. Should the Player under such circumstances lead a trump, he will very probably come to grief.

First Method of Play. Plain Suit Lead.

The Player therefore leads hearts, and after the knave of hearts has been used in trumping, he will proceed, should he by winning a trick in a plain suit again get the lead, to play the knave of spades. If, on the other hand, he is compelled to trump, he again leads a plain suit. In this case he will probably be enabled to *Schneider* his Opponents; and in the most unfavourable event he will only lose some 30 points.

Second Method of Play. Trump Lead.

The Player, leading trumps, is made *Schwarz*. Second hand, holding the two best knaves, seven spades, and one heart, takes the knave led, draws the remaining knave, and plays spades seven times in succession. The Player, who is compelled to throw away his hearts, and keep back the ace of a short suit, is made *Schwarz*.

8. You should endeavour to get rid of an unguarded ten at the first convenient moment. If you have no opportunity to throw it away, you should lead it, lest one of the Opponents should in the course of the game establish a *renounce* in that particular suit, and then play a high-scoring card to the trick. A trick of 31 or 32 points won by the Opponents will place the strongest *Grando* in jeopardy.

9. Having declared a *Grando* without Matadors, the Player, holding an ace, ten, should lead first the ace, and if it is not trumped, follow with the ten.

10. Should the Opponents lead a suit, of which the Player holds ace, but not the ten, he should play the ace, in order to obtain the lead.

11. If, however, the capture of the ten is needful in order to secure the game, or, the game being a certainty, to *Schneider* the Opponents, the Player should not take with the ace, but should finesse. (See NIPPING.)

THE GAME OF SKAT.

THE OPPONENTS.

The whole play of the Opponents in the case of a *Grando* centres in the drawing of the Player's trumps, in order to make their own strong suits, or to be able to overthrow those of the Player.

1. Should either of the Opponents hold both the superior knaves and a long plain suit, he will naturally lead trumps only so long as the Player is able to play trumps also.

2. Should he hold only the lowest knave with a strong plain suit, and a reasonable expectation of regaining the lead, he should then play the knave.

3. In a *Grando* it is good policy for the Opponents always to lead high-scoring cards, in order to compel the Player to trump.

4. A singleton should never be led.

5. Just as little should an Opponent, even though the Player be hinder hand, lead losing cards, the so doing enabling the Player to throw away losing cards also.

6. Should an Opponent be guilty of such a blunder, his partner should endeavour to rectify it by playing to the trick a high-scoring card.

7. An ace (unless you hold the ten also) should never be swarmed upon a trick, until you are quite clear as to the position of the rest of the suit in question.

c. *Nullo Games.*

THE PLAYER.

1. In *Nullo* games there are eight cards of each suit.*

2. The Player cannot lead more than once, and that only if he is elder hand.

* It must be remembered that there are in *Nullo* *no trumps*. The knaves and tens lose their exceptional value, and revert to their normal positions in their respective suits.

PLAY IN VARIOUS GAMES.

3. If the Player has a nine single, he should play it as a matter of course, as the most dangerous card * (unless indeed he has, or can probably establish, a *renounce*), even at the risk of winning the first trick.

4. An eight single should in like manner be led, in order to make a safe *Nullo*.†

5. If the Player has cards of a given suit which he must throw away, to lead that suit would betray his *renounce*. He should wait therefore until one of the Opponents leads it.

6. If the Player holds the seven, nine and ten (only) of a given suit, he should lead the ten, but if he has other cards of the suit, he should choose for preference some other suit, for it may happen that the adverse cards lie all in one hand.

7. Where the Player has to choose between two suits for lead, he should always lead from the shorter.

8. A suit of six cards should never be led from.‡ A departure from this rule has often spoilt a *Nullo* game.

9. A suit with seven, eight, and king or ace should never be led from.

10. In playing to the lead of an Opponent, the card next lower than the card led, should be played.

11. Should the Player (second hand) be compelled to head the trick, he should do so with his lowest card of the suit.

12. When an opportunity occurs for throwing away a card,

* If the seven and eight chance to be divided in the hands of the Opponents, the nine must take the trick, and the *Nullo* is lost.

† This is a moot point. Other authorities recommend that the lead should be from some other suit, leaving the Opponents to lead the suit of the singleton. They may in such case continue the lead, and give the Player an opportunity to throw away a dangerous card.

‡ Because one or both the missing cards may be in the "Skat," or both may be in the same hand.

the most dangerous should be selected. In order to know which such card is, the Player should have taken careful note of those already played.

N.B.—The ace of a long suit may be quite harmless, while an eight or nine left in the hand of the Player brings certain destruction, so soon as the lead falls into the hand of the second Opponent. A Player who has duly followed the course of the game should feel no doubt in such a case, unless indeed the master card chances to be in the "Skat."

13. In *Nullo Ouvert* the greatest possible care and most mature deliberation should be bestowed upon the first lead, for upon this the issue of the game very often depends.

14. Should the Player have risked a declaration of *Nullo Ouvert* with a singleton of any suit higher than the seven, that card should always be led.

15. The other rules above given for the lead in *Nullo* are equally applicable to the case of *Nullo Ouvert*.

EXAMPLE XV.

The Player (elder hand) has declared *Nullo Ouvert*.



What should be his lead? *Answer.* From the shorter suit (clubs) and the ten of such suit.

16. A suit without the seven is always dangerous, even when it consists of two cards only, for the Opponents may give the Player no opportunity of throwing away such suit.

EXAMPLE XVI.

The Player (second hand) declares *Nullo Ouvert*, and loses the game :—



PLAY IN VARIOUS GAMES.

Supposing that the cards of the elder hand Opponent were as follows :—



And that the “Skat” consisted of the ten and eight of Clubs, then the hinder hand must have the cards following :—



Elder hand leads his high cards : ace and king of Clubs, ace and king of Spades, ace of Hearts and ace of Diamonds, and then by playing the queen of Diamonds, throws the lead into the hand of his partner. The latter takes the trick with the king, and leads the ten of Spades, then the ten of Diamonds (upon which elder hand throws away his two remaining Hearts), and lastly, the seven of Hearts, which the Player is compelled to take, thereby losing the game.

THE OPPONENTS.

1. An Opponent should, whenever he has the opportunity, play a singleton.

N.B.—It is immaterial whether this be a seven, eight, or higher card. The rule applies whether the leader be seated to right or left of the Player.

2. It should be the endeavour of the Opponents to place the Player in the position of second hand, that being the most dangerous for him.

3. The lead of an Opponent should be continued by his partner.

4. If, however, you hold the whole remainder of the suit, you should only continue it if a favourable opportunity is thereby given to your partner to throw away a strong suit of the Player.

5. If the card led was a singleton, the Opponent, when the suit is led again by his partner, should throw away either from a suit in which he could himself make tricks, or from a short suit, in which he desires to establish a renounce.

6. The second Opponent should now, having due regard to his cards, settle in his own mind the plan of his further attack. He should either continue his partner's lead, or play the suit which the latter has thrown away, in consideration of Rule 4.

7. If the Player also throws away, the suit should not be further continued.

8. The Opponents should throughout strive to give the Player no opportunity of throwing away.

9. If the leader has no singleton, he should lead a card of intermediate value.

Queen, knave, ten, nine, are intermediate cards. Should the Player hold, for example, seven, eight, and a high card, he is sure to be caught if intermediate cards between his eight and his high card are led.

10. With ace, queen, seven, you should lead first the queen, and then, according to the fall of the cards, either the ace or the seven. But where five cards of the suit are out, it will in most cases be the safer plan to lead ace first.

11. The play of the Opponents in *Nullo Ouvert* can be carried out in a much more systematic manner, because the cards of the Player are known to them. Even though it is forbidden to take counsel in words, two practised players will very soon understand one another, and play into each other's hands. Thus, the one Opponent will continue the lead of the Player, in order to give his partner the opportunity of throwing away, while the latter will at a convenient moment assume the lead in order to give his friend a similar opportunity.

This is especially the case when one of the Opponents has led a singleton.

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EXAMPLE XVII.

The Player (second hand) has—



He declares *Nullo Ouvert* and loses the game. How must the cards of the Opponents be divided, and how should they be played, in order that hinder hand shall be enabled to defeat the *Nullo* by the last trick played?

Elder hand holds—



And hinder hand—



In the "Skat" are—



Elder hand leads the ten of Spades. The hinder hand takes the trick, and again leads Spades twice in succession; elder hand throwing away two Diamonds. Then hinder hand plays his four Clubs, on which the remaining four Diamonds of elder hand fall. In order to meet the conditions of the problem, hinder hand now plays his two Hearts, and on the very last trick lets in the Player by leading the seven of Diamonds.

d. Ramsch.

Ramsch is by no means an easy game to play. Though it has a strong affinity with *Nullo*, it is more difficult to manage, because the player must throughout keep himself a way to throw the lead into other hands after he has taken a trick. It is therefore by no means good policy from the outset,

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to shirk taking every trick you can, for in such case you are only too often left with the remainder of the suit in hand. You therefore do better to lead out a few high cards, in order to clear the hand. Long suits may become very dangerous, if you are left with the last cards thereof in hand. You should particularly avoid being compelled to lead from a long suit without the smaller cards, for in such case it not unfrequently happens that you cannot get rid of the lead, and are compelled to win all the remaining tricks. Should you hold one or more knaves, it is best to lead them as soon as possible.* Any knave left in hand should be used to trump a trick not comprising any scoring cards. When the knaves are got rid of, you should play the middle cards of long suits, so as to draw the smaller cards, and prevent the suits of your adversaries being again led; the high cards are then harmless. You should never attempt to count the points made at Ramsch, but only the cards played of each suit, so as always to know how many and which cards of a given suit are still in play. From lack of watchfulness in this particular, a player often gets no chance of leading a seven, which he has specially reserved for that purpose. Ace and ten of a suit are often harmless, while an eight or nine may make a trick, indeed probably will be bound to do so, unless the seven chances to be in the "Skat."

It will be obvious from the foregoing observation that the "Skat" has in Ramsch a very important influence on the fortune of the game.

* The cards in Ramsch rank as in Grando, the four knaves being the only trumps.



THE FINESSES OF THE GAME OF SKAT.

SKAT is a game like no other, and often places the player in positions where he will best attain his object by some exceptional line of play not provided for by the accepted rules of procedure.

There are modes of play which are covered neither by general principles nor special maxims, but which now and then turn out so fortunately, that we feel bound to give our readers the necessary hints respecting them. It must, however, be admitted that they are often a two-edged weapon, and none but a player who is qualified by long practice to form a correct judgment of the situation, should venture to make use of them. Even in such hands they may turn out fortunately or unfortunately; but it is sometimes clearly the right thing to use them: for they often form the only means of overthrowing a great game of the adversary, or of saving one's own.

I. FINESSES IN LEADING.

1. If a high game has been declared, and the elder hand Opponent has a long suit of six cards, including the *ten*, he should lead *this card*, whether the Player be second or third hand. The same lead *may* also succeed with five cards only. (See EXAMPLES XVIII. and XIX.) By this method of play a very strong game, and apparently irresistible, is often overthrown.

EXAMPLE XVIII.

Tourné.

The Player (hinder hand) holds the cards following:—



He turns up the king of Spades, taking in with it the ace of Hearts, and throwing out the queen of Diamonds and nine of Hearts, and yet loses the game. What was the play?

Answer.—The elder hand had five Hearts, from the ten

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downwards, and led the ten. Second hand trumped with the ace of Spades, while the Player was compelled to follow suit with the ace of Hearts. The second hand had five Diamonds, from the ten downwards, and led the card last named. The Player headed the trick with the ace, and the elder hand, having no Diamond, trumped with the ten of Spades. The game was thus lost, the Opponents having secured 64 points.

EXAMPLE XIX.

The Player (second hand) holds the cards following :—



He declares a *Solo* in Diamonds. He dares not venture, being second hand, to declare Schwarz, but contents himself with declaring Schneider. Not only, however, does he fail to make the Schneider, but loses the game altogether, although the "Skat" contains 14 points. What distribution and fall of the cards could produce such a result ?

Answer.—Elder hand has five Spades, including the ten, and leads this card. The Player heads the trick with the ace, but the third hand takes it with the ace of trumps (making 32 points), and then plays the ten of the Club suit, of which he has six. Elder hand trumps with the ten of Diamonds, and the Player plays the ace of Clubs, making 32 points more (in all, 64) to the Opponents. In the "Skat" are the ten of Hearts and the king of Spades.

Upon the question whether it was right with such a hand to declare a *Solo* in Diamonds, the reader is referred to what we have said under the head of "WHEN TO PLAY" the different games.

2. The same result might be obtained if *Grando* were declared.

EXAMPLE XX.

Second hand declares *Grando* with the cards following :—



The elder hand holds cards as under :—



The Player holding the two best knaves, three aces, and an amply guarded ten, the winning of the Grando seems a certainty, and yet it may be upset by the mode of play we have above indicated on the part of elder hand. Elder hand leads the ten of Clubs. The trick is won by third hand, who returns the ten of Hearts.



The Opponents have thus in the first two tricks secured 46 points, and since the Player must still lose at least the king of Diamonds trick, value 18 points (queen, king, ace), he loses the game, the Opponents securing 64 points.

3. The lead by hinder hand of ace or ten of trumps single, which we have already discussed under the head of THE LEAD (Opponents), comes likewise under this category.

2. NIPPING.

When the Player, having several good cards, not in sequence, of a given suit, as second hand plays not his highest, but a lower card, just large enough to head the trick, at the risk of a still higher being played by the third hand, such a line of play is termed "Nipping." The Player has made an attempt at a "Nip."

For example, the Player (second hand), has ace, king, and nine of Hearts. The elder hand leads the queen. The Player believes the ten to lie, not with the third, but with the elder hand, and in the hope of capturing this, plays the king instead of the ace. Should his supposition prove correct, his attempt

is a success, and the ten in the elder hand will later on be "nipped" by the ace.

The "nip" properly so-called is, therefore, only practised by the Player in the position of second hand, for the true "nip" is not allowable as against a partner. There is, however, another line of play in the game of Skat which is also known as Nipping. This occurs where a player, without being exposed to the danger of his card being headed by a higher, covers a hostile card not with his highest, but with some lower card. If, for example, the Player leads a queen, and the second or third hand takes with king and not with ace, he is likewise said to "nip," though in this case the essential characteristic of nipping, viz., the danger of the card being beaten by that of the next player, is lacking.* There is, however, one danger attendant on this form of nipping, *i.e.*, that the ace may be subsequently trumped. For this form of nipping the more general expression "finessing" is the more appropriate term, while the use of the word "nipping" should be confined to its primary meaning as above explained, *i.e.*, where there is an opponent to follow.

In spite of the risk involved in nipping proper, its use very often becomes a necessity. As a general rule the nip should be employed—

1. Where, unless it is used, and succeeds, the game is lost.
2. Where the game is a certainty for the Player, and by the use of the "nip" he may make his opponents "Schneider."

The Opponents will employ it under corresponding circumstances, that is to say—

1. When they are already safe from being "Schneidered," and have a fair chance by the use of the "nip" to win the game.
2. When they have no prospect of escaping a "Schneider" by any other means.

* At Skat, unlike Whist, it is not always good policy for the last player to win the trick with his lowest available card. The trick is *ex hypothesi* his own, but by taking it with the king he adds four points only to its value. By taking it with the ace he adds eleven points.

The false nip (by third hand) is more frequently used. The Player when third hand finesse whenever he has the opportunity, indeed it is only when (a.) he can by means of a weak trump card secure his game, or (b.) one of the Opponents has command of trumps and none of the plain suit led—that he plays his highest scoring card. The opposing players must be a little more cautious, but in their case also the false nip is pretty frequently used. If the Player has led a small card of any suit, it is a matter of course for the Opponents to finesse, if they have reason to believe that the Player desires to clear the way for a ten or king. The Opponents should in such case do their best to again throw the lead into the hand of the Player.

With ace and king together in the third hand it is a matter of course to finesse against the Player, but only in very exceptional circumstances to do so against one's partner. The Opponents should in the lead of the Player give him as little opportunity as possible for finessing.

3. WHETHER TO THROW AWAY OR TO TRUMP.

If a suit is led to the Player, of which he has none, he has the option either to trump or to "throw away" (*i.e.*, pass the trick). A correct decision may often cause the winning—an incorrect, the losing, of the game. The judicious throwing away of losing cards, or of such scoring plain suit cards as are not certain to make, is one of the most important aids, to a good Skat-player, in the management of a doubtful game.

It may be laid down as a general principle, that the Player, when third hand, should always throw away a losing card, unless the trick contains at least one scoring card, or there is other special reason to the contrary.

With a hand weak in trumps it is now and then desirable to pass the trick even when a high-scoring card is included in it, so long as the Opponents do not with such trick also win the game. Second hand, when weak in trumps, should always pass the trick when elder hand leads a middle card. When strong in trumps the Player must be guided by his own

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hand. This principle is frequently overlooked, and for fear of losing a trick containing a good scoring card, the Player trumps when he ought to have passed the trick. Nothing but long experience, and especially a correct appreciation of the position of the game (to obtain which the amount of the score made and to be made on both sides must be taken into consideration), will here teach correct play.

We append a few examples, as the safest method of enabling the reader to form his own judgment in this particular.

EXAMPLE XXI.

The Player (elder hand), holding the cards following, has declared a *Solo* in Clubs :

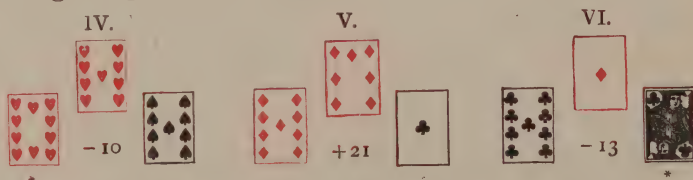


Each of his opponents has two trumps. The cards fall as under :



What should the Player do? *Answer.* He should throw away Spades twice, and if he does so he will win the game. Thus, he plays to the last trick the seven of Spades, leaving its value, as before,—14.

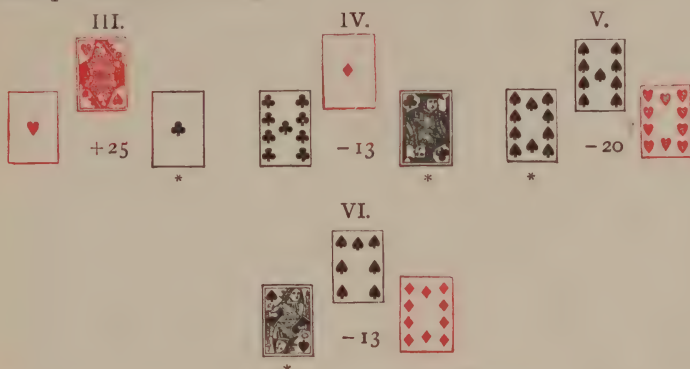
The game proceeds as follows :



The Player has thus given away (at most) 56 points, but

THE FINESSES OF THE GAME.

all those remaining belong to himself. If, on the other hand, he trumps the third trick, he loses the game. Thus, the Opponents have secured in the first two tricks 19 points. The game proceeds as follows :



And the game is lost, the Opponents having secured 65 points.

The question, whether to trump or to throw away, has in Grando still greater importance. The Player must consider whether he may not by trumping too early so shorten his trumps as to be unable to establish a suit. Where this is likely to happen it seems preferable to secure the trick and abandon the suit.*

EXAMPLE XXII.

The Player (second hand) holds the cards following :



Elder hand has—



* The original runs :—" In diesem Fälle scheint es besser, *abzuwerfen* und die Farbe preiszugeben ;" but this is a contradiction in terms. The object of throwing away (*abzuwerfen*) would be to economize trumps, with the view of *establishing* the suit.

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Third hand has—



And in the Skat are—



The Player declares *Grando*. Can he lose the game, and if so, how? The answer must be as follows:—The cards of the Opponents are so favourably placed, that if the game is properly played, the Player cannot fail to make the *Grando*. All depends on whether he trumps or throws away.

If the Player throws away with discretion he wins the game. If he trumps, he loses.

First Method of Play.

THE PLAYER TRUMPS, AND LOSES THE GAME.

Elder hand leads the king of Diamonds. The Player trumps, and third hand plays the nine. The Player then leads a knave, to which the knave of Diamonds falls. The Player then leads (and makes) his four Clubs, and follows with the nine of Hearts. Hinder hand “swarms” on this the ace of Diamonds. Elder hand takes with the king of Hearts, and leads the ace of Spades. The Player either trumps with his last remaining knave, or passes the trick, throwing away the queen of Hearts. In the first case he must lose his two remaining Hearts and the game, for he makes no further trick. In the second case hinder hand plays the king of Spades to the trick; whereupon elder hand proceeds to lead the ace of Hearts. The Player’s ten of Hearts falls to it, and third hand swarms the ten of Diamonds on the trick. The value of the three tricks thus secured by the adversaries is $15 + 18 + 31 = 64$. The game is lost in consequence of the Player having trumped the first trick (the king of Diamonds).

Second Mode of Play.

ELDER HAND, AS BEFORE, LEADS KING OF DIAMONDS. THE PLAYER DOES NOT TRUMP, BUT PASSES THE TRICK, AND WINS THE GAME.

A skilled Player perceives that he has not sufficient strength in trumps to establish the Heart suit. He therefore does not trump, but passes the trick, in the hope of throwing the lead into the hands of the last player. His plan succeeds, for the hinder hand takes with the ace, and leads either king of Spades (in which case the elder hand plays the ten of Spades upon it), or ten of Diamonds.

In either event the Player trumps the trick; and after drawing the knave of Diamonds, plays his four Clubs, and is then left with the ten and queen of Hearts,* and one knave still unplayed. The elder hand has left the ace and king of Hearts, and the ten of Spades; the hinder hand either the ten of Diamonds or the king of Spades, and small cards.

The Player is compelled to surrender the two Heart tricks, but captures the ten of Spades. The Opponents thus secure the ace, ten, king, and queen of Hearts. The ten of Diamonds (or king of Spades, as the case may be), is swarmed by hinder hand on the queen of Hearts, but the total is still insufficient. The Player has won his game.

Success or failure in this game turns on the Player's using or not using his trumps to the best possible advantage. By snatching the 4 points of the king of Diamonds, he loses the game; while if he reserves his strength for the more profitable chances offered to him at a later stage, he wins. The ace of Diamonds, which wins the first trick, would not in any case be likely to fall to him, as he is bound to lose two tricks in Hearts. But if he trumps he loses *three* tricks in Hearts, and these three suffice to spoil his game.

A result unfavourable to the Player is only possible when one only of the Opponents holds Hearts, as in the example following.

* The nine having been thrown away to the first trick.

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Third Method of Play, with a somewhat different Distribution of the Cards.

Should the remaining cards of the Heart suit lie all in one hand (say with elder hand), and should the same Player hold in addition to the Hearts a long suit, with which he can compel the Player to trump, such a hand for example as the following :—



The game must always be lost, if elder hand leads the ace of Spades. The cards of hinder hand will in such case be as follows * :—



The elder hand leading ace of Spades, the Player trumps, draws the knave of Diamonds, plays his four Clubs in succession, and is then left with the knave of Spades, and the ten, queen, and nine of Hearts. He leads the nine of Hearts. The next player plays the ten of Spades; elder hand takes with the king of Hearts (—14), and then leads the king of Spades. If the Player trumps he loses all the rest, for he never again takes a trick. If on the contrary he throws away the queen of Hearts, third hand swarms the ace of Diamonds upon it (—18). Elder hand plays the ace of Hearts, to which fall the ten of Hearts and the ten of Diamonds (—31). Total, —63. In either case the game is lost. The throwing away of the nine of Hearts in this case saves the Player nothing.

* For convenience of reference we repeat the hand of the Player—



The Skat cards will now be the seven and eight of Diamonds.

4. FINESSES IN TRUMPING.

When the Player, being second hand, cannot throw away, but is compelled to trump, he should play for preference an intermediate card (in order to invite over-trumping), rather than break into a head sequence. Should he be over-trumped, he thereby becomes last player, an advantage which often richly compensates for the loss of the trick. It is only when a high-scoring card is led, that he should break into a closed sequence and play a high card.

EXAMPLE XXIII.

The Player holds the cards following :—



He is third hand, and has declared a *Solo* in Spades.

The elder hand leads Diamonds. Second hand wins the trick with the ace, and continues with the ten. The Player follows suit, and elder hand swarms a ten upon the trick. Second hand then leads the queen of Diamonds. What should the Player do?

Answer.—The Player has six trumps, of which four are Matadors, and has consequently the command, unless all the five other trumps are against him in one hand. The Player therefore trumps, but with which card should he do so,—with the queen or with one of his knaves? If he trumps with the queen, but is over-trumped by the ten or ace lying in the third hand, of course this latter card is lost to him; which would have been the case if the trumps were divided between the two Opponents and he had reserved the fourth knave to draw trumps with. He has however thereby gained the position of last player, and has the rest of the game, a dead certainty, in his own hands. If, on the contrary, he trumps with one of his knaves, he weakens himself in the trump suit, so that the ace if lying to his right, and if the distri-

bution of trumps is unfavourable, the ten also, will make a trick.

He therefore trumps with the queen, at the risk of losing the trick. The Opponents will at most make 52 points; but if he takes with the knave (which is still less correct, if the Opponents have already escaped the risk of a Schneider), he may repent it bitterly. We will suppose that the Player trumps with a knave, and then leads trumps three times in succession. The second hand has none of the suit. In such case ace and ten remain with the other Opponent. He therefore runs the risk of losing not merely two tricks in trumps, but thus loses by injudicious trumping a game which otherwise would have been absolutely certain.

5. SWARMING.

1. If a suit be led of which one of the Opponents has none, the latter may, if the trick belongs to his partner, play to it a high-scoring card of some other suit. The throwing away of a scoring card in this manner is known as "swarming."

2. Judicious swarming is one of the most effective expedients of the Skat-player. It is mainly upon this that the Opponents depend to prevent the Player winning his game; each must therefore take care lest by swarming he assist the Player to get the command of a suit; and must at the same time endeavour, by means of the cards swarmed, to give useful hints to his partner.

3. Should the Player lead a card of a suit in which the second hand has a renounce, and which will in all probability be won by his partner (the third player), the second hand should "swarm" a strong card on the trick. He must, however, take care lest he fall a victim to a feint on the part of the Player.

4. Should one of the Opponents play a winning card, his partner (even second hand) should swarm a scoring card upon it; but should the card be a high-scoring card, played in

order to induce the Player to trump, the second hand should not swarm, if he knows that the Player has no more of the suit.

5. The aces of suits which have not yet been played, should not, as a rule, be swarmed.

6. But where there is a fair chance, by throwing away a high card, to cause the Player to lose the game, an Opponent should without hesitation play such an ace to the card led by his partner, even though the Player's score be thereby brought up to 60 points.

7. Holding ace and ten, particularly of a long suit, the ace may be swarmed, and if the player has king also, he may afterwards swarm the ten, even though the suit has not yet been led.

8. If therefore your partner, without thereby securing the game, swarms the ace of a suit as yet unled, it may be taken for granted that he holds the ten also.

9. If your partner is drawing trumps, you should throw away worthless cards, only swarming scoring cards when the game is likely to be secured thereby.

6. FEINTS.

1. All available means are allowable to the Player in order to win his game. The deluding or misleading of the Opponents is one of such means, and often turns out favourably ; sometimes even when employed with downright recklessness, not to say impudence. (*See post*, Example XXVI.) The opponents must not allow themselves to be disconcerted by such tactics, but must endeavour to fight a player of this description with his own weapons.

2. Among the most frequently used feints is the following. The Player having three or more knaves from the best downwards, employs a feint by leading that of lowest rank.

The second player, if he chance to have no trump, will very probably throw a scoring card to the trick (in the expectation that it will be taken by his partner), and this may often cause the winning of the game.

EXAMPLE XXIV.



The Player (elder hand) on the foregoing cards declares *Grando*. How should he play?

Answer.—The Player must accept it as a certainty, that if the remaining Clubs lie all in one hand, he will lose the game. In order to win it, he must capture a “ten,” and he must make his king of Clubs. There are two alternative modes of play. The first is to try your fortune with the Clubs; the second, to make use of the feint with the knave, above described, and then to pass a trick.

The Player, we will suppose, chooses the first plan, and leads the queen of Clubs. The Clubs happen to be unfavourably placed.

1st Trick.—Queen of Clubs, ace of Spades, ace of Clubs, = — 25.

Regaining the lead with his ten of Diamonds, he leads (*3rd Trick*) seven of Clubs, ace of Hearts, nine of Clubs, = — 11.

5th Trick.—King of Clubs, ten of Spades, ten of Clubs, = — 24. Total — 60. He loses the game, through having reckoned on a favourable distribution of the Clubs. A prudent player would have taken into consideration the contingency that four Clubs might lie in one hand, and first have tried the feint with the knave of Diamonds. The chance that the second Player, giving his partner credit for at least one knave, might swarm an ace or ten on the trick, is by no means remote. In such case the Player would have won his game.

3. The same description of feint (leading the lowest of a

head sequence) applies equally to the case of a long plain suit.

EXAMPLE XXV.

The Player (elder hand), the other players having passed, declares *Tourné* with the cards following :—



He turns up the seven of Clubs and takes in with it the ace of Diamonds. He throws out ace and ten of Diamonds, and by means of a feint, wins the game.

Explanation.—In order to tempt the Opponents to swarm, he leads the queen of Diamonds, and play proceeds as under:—

1st Trick.—Queen of Diamonds, ten of Spades, seven of Diamonds = 13.

2nd Trick.—Ace of Hearts, queen of Hearts, seven of Hearts = 14.

3rd Trick.—Ten of Hearts, king of Hearts, eight of Hearts = 14.

The two cards left in the “Skat” represent 21 points, making a total of 62. The Player thus, with one trump only, wins the *Tourné* in Clubs, solely because by means of his feint, the second player was induced to swarm a ten upon the first trick.

4. Feints are often brought into use against a careless Player, in order to upset his game.

5. For instance, where the Opponents have all but secured the game, and lack but a few points to win, one of them will play a winning card of small scoring value, say a king or queen, which secures the game, in the hope that the Player may prefer, on a trick involving so few points, to throw away an unsafe card.* (See PLAY OF THE OPPONENTS: POINT 4,

* On the assumption that the Player, being of a careless disposition (see last paragraph), will not have noted the precise state of the score, and therefore will not recognise his danger.

page 80). He can still count on some additional points being swarmed on the trick by his partner.

6. We will conclude this section by describing what we may call "the height of impudence" feint.

EXAMPLE XXVI.

A friend of the writer, who, as an enthusiast for the game, never lost an opportunity of studying the varieties of Skat in different parts of Germany, witnessed not long ago, in a village ale-house at Altenburg, the bit of sharp practice next described on the part of a worthy peasant of the district. It should be premised that in that neighbourhood it was the rule to show both cards of the "Skat," and to declare *Schneider* and *Schwarz* even in connection with a *Tourné*.* The example shows how easily a feint may succeed if it is only executed with sufficient audacity.

Our hero was elder hand, and held the cards following :—



The other players having passed, the game rested with him. He turned up the knave of Clubs, then declared *Grando*, and after taking in, as the second "Skat" card, the ten of Clubs (first showing it, according to the local rule above mentioned), he advanced his declaration to *Grando Schwarz*, and won the game.

What did he throw out, and how were the cards of the Opponents distributed ?

The Player had thrown out the eight of Spades and the ten of Hearts. The second hand had—



* This is contrary to the more general rule (see pp. 26, 28), according to which such a declaration is only made in connection with a Solo game.

and the hinder hand—



The game depended entirely on which suit the hinder hand held back, Clubs or Spades. The hinder hand Opponent allowed himself to be deceived, and to fall into the trap of the Player, and taking it for granted that the Player had discarded the ten of Clubs, threw away from that suit, and so lost the game.*

7. Feints are also frequently employed in Nullo games. With a very bad Nullo hand the Player should lead a small card of a hazardous suit, as the Opponents will thereby be discouraged from leading that suit. But a skilled Opponent only too readily suspects the artifice, so that it is always a dangerous, not to say desperate expedient, for the Player injures his position in the suit led, and when opposed to an acute player, is pretty sure to get the worst of the contest.

7. THROWING UP THE GAME.

The Player, after making his discard, should once more examine his hand, and see whether he has a reasonable chance of winning the game, or in the event of losing it, of escaping a *Schneider*. If he perceives from the fall of the first cards played that Fate is likely to be against him, he will do better to throw up the game.

The general rule on this subject is as follows:—

Play out your game if there is no fear of your being made Schneider. Should there be any risk of this, throw up the game.

The Player is permitted to throw up the game, so long as

* Hinder hand having himself five out of the seven clubs, including ace, knows that the Player must be extremely weak in that suit, though from the boldness of his declaration it may fairly be inferred that he is very strong in other directions. Under such circumstances it is a matter of course to suppose that he will have placed the ten of clubs in safety by his discard, and that hinder hand's chance of bringing in his clubs is extremely remote. The latter therefore throws away clubs in preference to spades. Had he adopted the opposite tactics, his ace of clubs would have taken the ten, and the game would have been saved.

not more than one trick has been played.* Among skilled players, who cannot reckon on any slips on the part of their opponents, a Player who has no longer a reasonable expectation of winning, prefers to throw up his hand, rather than delay the progress of the game.

8. KEEPING COUNT.

Correct *counting* is one of the most important accomplishments of a Skat-player, and one which the beginner must do his utmost to acquire. The Player should not only know how many points there are in the tricks which he himself has won, but also how many points have been made by his opponents. This is not a very easy matter, but any one who accustoms himself from the outset to take mental note of the score will soon have acquired such a habit of it, that he keeps count mechanically. A beginner should never be allowed to refer to the tricks already made to see how many points they contain, or he will always rely on the same indulgence afterwards. A player whose wits have been sharpened by repeated losses, will take good care of himself for the future.

The following matters are included under the head of "Counting."

1. How many points you yourself, and how many your opponents, have made.
2. How many trumps are still in hand, and what trumps have been played.
3. The Player should know when either of the adversaries has no more trumps.
4. You must also keep an eye on the plain suits, and remember how many cards have fallen of each suit that has been played.
5. You should also take particular notice what high cards have been "swarmed."

* Some allow the Player to throw up on the completion of the *second trick*, or even later. See p. 56.

The novice should begin in the first instance by counting the trumps; next the number of points made by his own side, and so proceed, step by step.

When playing a weak Solo hand the Player should count in preference the points made by his opponents; while an Opponent, with a strong opposing hand, should rather keep count of the points made by the Player. In games where the "Skat" is used, each player should count the cards of his own side in preference.

THE SCORE.

COMPUTATION OF GAINS AND LOSSES.



THE best method of settling accounts, though it involves a little trouble, is to pay either in cash or counters at the close of each game. The counters take the place of money, and at the close of the evening's play are exchanged for current coin. Each player has a little box containing counters of different shape, but all of one particular colour. The different shapes represent different values. To facilitate the settlement, each player should be furnished with counters of at least three shapes (representing *ones*, *tens* and *fifties*), as under:—

An oblong counter, thus  = 1

A circular counter, thus  = 10

A square counter, thus  = 50

There may also be intermediate counters, of any shape you please, to represent fives and twenties.

The Scoring Paper.

Where the players do not care to adopt the above method, they draw up a scoring paper, whereon the account of each

player is set down. In such account, under the name of each player, is set down the value of the first game won or lost by him; to this number the value of each game afterwards won by him is added, and from it the value of each game afterwards lost by him is subtracted, the new result being each time written down, so that *the last number* appearing in the account of each shows at a glance how he stands. The *minus* sign before a number indicates points against him.

The names of the players are set down in the order in which they deal, thus:—*

A.	B.	C.	D.
— 14	+ 20	+ 40	+ 80
— 24	+ 42	+ 72	+ 44
— 12	+ 66	+ 62	+ 24
+ 12	+ 76		+ 4
+ 2			+ 14

N.B.—In order conclusively to settle any dispute as to whose turn (among three players) it is to deal, the following

* The above table represents a scoring paper for *four* players. In such case each player stands out, so far as actual play is concerned, every fourth round, but wins or loses with the Opponents.

It is to be borne in mind that *one* entry only is made in respect of each game, such entry being made below the name of the "Player," the value of the game being added to or subtracted from his previous score. Thus in the table above given A. is supposed to have *lost* the first game in which he was Player. The value of such game was *fourteen*, and accordingly — 14 is set against his name; such — 14 representing that number of points to be made good to *each* of the other players. At his second attempt he has lost a game value *ten* points, and accordingly his previous debit is increased by that number, making his total liability — 24. At his next attempt as Player he has won a game of *twelve* points, thus reducing his liability to — 12. In the next game in which he is Player he is more fortunate. He wins the game, value *twenty-four* points. This cancels his previous liability, and leaves 12 points to his credit, which amount is, however, afterwards reduced, by the loss of a game of *ten* points, to 2 points only.

B. is more fortunate. He wins each game which he plays. The value of the first is twenty points, and 20 points are accordingly placed to his credit. His next game is worth 22 points, increasing his score to 42. A third game, value 24, brings it up to 66, and a fourth game, value 10, to 76.

little practical expedient may be recommended. The score-keeper draws under every third game of each player a thin line. Should any doubt arise he has only to add together the games inscribed below the last lines; which can never be more than six, in order to see at a glance whose turn it is to deal.*

In order to ascertain the amount won or lost by each player, the last figure appearing under his name must be multiplied by the number of the remaining players (two, three, or more, as the case may be), and the sum of the points of the other players subtracted from the result. Thus the effect of the scores above shown would be as follows:

It will be remembered that the last figures set against the names of the players are A. 2; B. 76; C. 62; D. 14.

A. 2 × 3	= 6	Result.
Less (76 + 62 + 14)	= 152	= - 146

C. wins a game of 40 points, and then one of 32, but his total of 72 is diminished by the loss of his third game, value 10, which reduces his score to 62 points.

D. starts by winning a game of 80 points, but loses his second, third, and fourth games, value 36, 20, and 20 respectively, progressively reducing his score to 44, 24 and 4. His fifth game, value 10, he wins, his ultimate score standing at 14 points.

At the close of the evening's play, therefore, A. has to his credit 2 points; B. 76; C. 62; and D. 14. For the manner in which these figures are dealt with in the final settlement see the text.

It should be mentioned by way of caution that a run of ill-luck or indifferent play at Skat may frequently involve rather high figures, and that it will be well therefore for beginners to assess the single "point" at a very low value. The German *pfennig* = only $\frac{1}{100}$ of a shilling, but even pfennig "points" may mount up to somewhat startling totals.

* As has been already stated, there is *one* entry made (the score of the Player) for each game. If the total number of the games played is evenly divisible by three, each has dealt the same number of times, and it is the turn of the original dealer. If there is a remainder of *one*, it is the turn of the second player; if a remainder of *two*, the turn of the third player. The plan indicated in the text is an expedient for shortening the process of calculation. The drawing a line below, as suggested, cancels each complete group of three games, and the dividing process is applied (with the same result) to the small number not so cancelled.

Where there are four players, no question as to the turn to deal can arise, for the dealer takes no part in the game, and the players cannot possibly forget who last remained inactive.

THE GAME OF SKAT.

		Result.
B. 76×3	$= 228$	
Less $(2 + 62 + 14)$	$= 78$	$= 150$
C. 62×3	$= 186$	
Less $(2 + 76 + 14)$	$= 92$	$= 94$
D. 14×3	$= 42$	
Less $(2 + 76 + 62)$	$= 140$	$= - 98$

showing that A. and D. have *lost* 146 and 98 points respectively, and that B. and C. have *won* 150 and 94 points respectively.

If the calculation has been correctly made, the score of the points lost should exactly equal that of the points won, thus :

$$\begin{aligned} 150 + 94 &= 244 \\ - 146 - 98 &= - 244 \end{aligned}$$

The process is the same should the last number against the name of one or more players be a *minus* amount, save that in such case, for the purpose of the calculation, the *minus* points of the other players must be turned into *plus*, and the *plus* into *minus* points; in other words, the signs must be reversed.

Suppose, for example, that the score at the close stood as under :—

A. - 2; B. 76; C. - 62; D. 14.

Then—

$$\begin{aligned} \text{A. } - 2 \times 3 & (= - 6) - 76 + 62 - 14 = - 34 \\ \text{B. } 76 \times 3 & (= 228) + 62 - 14 + 2 = 278 \\ \text{C. } - 62 \times 3 & (= - 186) - 14 + 2 - 76 = - 274 \\ \text{D. } 14 \times 3 & (= 42) + 2 - 76 + 62 = 30 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 278 \\ 30 \\ \hline 308 \\ \hline \hline \end{array} \qquad \begin{array}{r} - 34 \\ - 274 \\ \hline - 308 \\ \hline \hline \end{array}$$

A second method of ascertaining the amount won or lost

THE SCORE.

by each player, is by working out each account separately. Thus, supposing that the closing entries are

A. - 40; B. 3; C. - 15; D. 102.

Then A.—

loses to B. his own	- 40 and B.'s	3 = -	43
" to C.	" - 40 less C.'s	- 15 = -	25
" to D.	" - 40 and D.'s	102 = -	142
Total			43 - 25 - 142 = - 210

B.—

wins from A., A.'s	- 40 and his own	3 =	43
" C., C.'s	- 15 "	3 =	18
loses to D., D.'s	102 less his own	3 = -	99
Total			43 + 18 - 99 = - 38

C.—

wins from A., A.'s	- 40 less his own	- 15 =	25
loses to B., B.'s	3 and his own	- 15 = -	18
" D., D.'s	102 and his own	- 15 = -	117
Total			25 - 18 - 117 = - 110

D.—

wins from A., A.'s	- 40 and his own	102 =	142
" B. his own	102 less B.'s	3 =	99
" C. his own	102 and A.'s	- 15 =	117
Total			142 + 99 + 117 = 358

Thus A. has lost	.	.	- 210
B.	"	.	- 38
C.	"	.	- 110

Total - 358 points.

and D. has won 358 points.

THE GAME OF SKAT.

The adjustment of the account may be simplified by putting the player who has the smallest score back to *zero*, and subtracting a corresponding number from each of the other totals. Thus, if the final scores had been :—

A. 2 ; B. 76 ; C. 62 ; D. 14,

the player with the smallest total (*i.e.* A.) would be set back to 0 ; and the number of points made by him (2) would be subtracted from the points of each player ; when the scores would stand :—

A. 0 ; B. 74 ; C. 60 ; D. 12.

Should one or more players have a *minus* quantity, the numbers are reduced in like manner, by adding the score of the player who has the largest number of *minus* points to the final scores of the other three players. As a natural consequence, those players who have a smaller number of *minus* points, now get the difference in positive points, and the player who is worst off stands at zero.

Say, for example, that the play has closed as under :

A. — 40 ; B. 3 ; C. — 15 ; D. 102.

A. has the largest number of *minus* points, and his total is therefore added to the scores of the other three ; making the new figures as under :—

A. 0 ; B. $3 + 40 = 43$; C. $- 15 + 40 = 25$; D. $102 + 40 = 142$.

After the hindmost player has thus been set back to zero, and the amounts of the other players altered (as above) to correspond, you proceed as before to compute the actual gain or loss of each player.



TABLE OF VALUES. THE STANDARD GAME.

	DESCRIPTION OF GAME.	WITH (OR WITHOUT) THE BEST KNAVE.			WITH (OR WITHOUT) TWO MATADORS.			WITH (OR WITHOUT) THREE MATADORS.			WITH (OR WITHOUT) FOUR MATADORS.		
		Game.	Schneider.	Declared.*	Game.	Schneider.	Declared.*	Game.	Schneider.	Declared.*	Game.	Schneider.	Declared.*
1.	In Diamonds . .	1	2	3	3	4	6	3	6	7	4	8	5
2.	" Hearts . .	2	4	6	6	8	12	8	10	14	10	12	10
3.	" Spades . .	3	6	9	9	12	15	9	12	18	15	18	15
4.	" Clubs . .	4	8	12	12	16	20	12	16	24	16	20	16
5.	In Diamonds . .	5	10	15	15	20	25	15	20	24	20	25	20
6.	" Hearts . .	6	12	18	18	24	30	18	24	30	24	30	24
7.	" Spades . .	7	14	21	21	28	35	21	28	35	28	35	25
8.	" Clubs . .	8	16	24	24	32	40	24	32	40	32	40	28
9.	Grando . .	12	24	36	36	48	60	36	48	60	48	60	40
10.	Nulló . .	16	—	—	—	—	—	48	60	72	60	72	48
11.	" Ouvert . .	32	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
12.	In Diamonds . .	9	18	27	27	36	45	27	36	45	36	45	36
13.	" Hearts . .	10	20	30	30	40	50	30	40	50	40	50	36
14.	" Spades . .	11	22	33	33	44	55	33	44	55	44	55	40
15.	" Clubs . .	12	24	36	36	48	60	36	48	60	48	60	44
16.	Grando . .	16	32	48	48	64	80	48	64	80	64	80	56
17.	" Ouvert . .	24	48	72	72	96	120	72	96	120	96	120	80
18.	Nulló . .	24	—	—	—	—	—	144	168	192	120	144	108
	" Ouvert . .	48	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	" Revolution . .	72	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

* See note on page 127.

THE GAME OF SKAT.

TABLE OF VALUES. THE STANDARD GAME—continued.

DESCRIPTION OF GAME.	BASIS VALUES.	WITH (OR WITHOUT) FIVE MATADORS.				WITH (OR WITHOUT) SIX MATADORS.				WITH (OR WITHOUT) SEVEN MATADORS.				WITH (OR WITHOUT) EIGHT MATADORS.			
		Game.	Schneider.	Declared Schneider.*	Schwarz.	Declared Schwarz.*	Game.	Schneider.	Declared Schneider.*	Schwarz.	Declared Schwarz.*	Game.	Schneider.	Declared Schneider.*	Schwarz.	Declared Schwarz.*	
Simple Games.	1. Diamonds . . .	6	7	8	9	10	7	8	9	10	11	8	9	10	11	12	13
	2. Hearts . . .	12	14	16	18	20	21	16	18	20	22	16	18	20	22	24	26
	3. Spades . . .	3	18	21	24	27	30	24	27	30	33	24	27	30	33	36	39
	4. Clubs . . .	4	24	28	32	36	40	32	36	40	44	32	36	40	44	48	52
	5. Diamonds . . .	5	30	35	40	45	50	40	45	50	55	40	45	50	55	60	65
Tourné Games.	6. Hearts . . .	6	36	42	48	54	60	48	54	60	66	48	54	60	66	72	78
	7. Spades . . .	7	42	49	56	63	70	56	63	70	77	56	63	70	77	84	91
	8. Clubs . . .	8	48	56	64	72	80	64	72	80	88	64	72	80	88	96	104
	9. Grando . . .	12	—	—	—	—	56	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	10. Nullo . . .	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Solo Games.	11. " Ouvert . . .	32	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	12. Diamonds . . .	9	54	63	72	81	63	72	81	90	99	72	81	90	99	108	117
	13. Hearts . . .	10	60	70	80	90	70	82	90	100	110	80	90	100	110	120	130
	14. Spades . . .	11	66	77	88	99	77	88	99	110	121	88	99	110	121	132	143
	15. Clubs . . .	12	72	84	96	108	84	96	108	120	132	96	108	120	132	144	156
16. Grando . . .	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
17. " Ouvert . . .	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
18. Nullo . . .	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	" Ouvert . . .	48	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	" Revolution . . .	72	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

* See note on page 127.

TABLE OF VALUES. THE STANDARD GAME—continued.

	DESCRIPTION OF GAME.	WITH (OR WITHOUT) NINE MATADORS.						WITH (OR WITHOUT) TEN MATADORS.						WITH (OR WITHOUT) ELEVEN MATADORS.					
		Game.	Schneider.	Declared Schneider.*	Schwarz.	Declared Schwarz.*	Basis Values.	Game.	Schneider.	Declared Schneider.*	Schwarz.	Declared Schwarz.*	Game.	Schneider.	Declared Schneider.*	Schwarz.	Declared Schwarz.*		
1.	{ Diamonds Hearts Spades Clubs }	1	10	11	13	14		11	12	13	14	15	12	13	14	15	16		
2.		2	20	22	24	26		22	24	26	28	30	24	26	28	30	32		
3.		3	30	33	36	39	42		33	36	39	42	45	36	39	42	45	48	
4.		4	40	44	48	52	56		44	48	52	56	60	48	52	56	60	64	
5.	{ Diamonds Hearts Spades Clubs }	5	50	55	60	65		55	60	65	70	75	60	65	70	75	80		
6.		6	60	66	72	78		66	72	78	84	90	72	78	84	90	96		
7.		7	70	77	84	91	98		77	84	91	98	105	84	91	98	105	112	
8.		8	80	88	96	104	112		88	96	104	112	120	96	104	112	120	128	
9.	Grando . . .	12	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
10.	Nulló . . .	16	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
11.	” Ouvert . . .	32	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
12.	{ Diamonds Hearts Spades Clubs }	9	90	99	108	117		99	108	117	126	135	108	117	126	135	144		
13.		10	100	110	120	130	140		110	120	130	140	150	120	130	140	150	160	
14.		11	110	121	132	143	154		121	132	143	154	165	132	143	154	165	176	
15.		12	120	132	144	156	168		132	144	156	168	180	144	156	168	180	192	
16.	Grando . . .	16	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
17.	” Ouvert . . .	24	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
18.	Nulló . . .	24	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
	” Ouvert . . .	48	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
	” Revolution . . .	72	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
		Tourne Games.																	
		Solo Games.																	

* The figures enclosed within waved lines, under Declared Schneider and Declared Schwarz respectively, apply when by local custom or express agreement such declarations are allowed in connection with the *Simple* or *Tourné* game. (See pages 26, 28.)

TABLE OF VARIATIONS IN THE MODE OF RECKONING SOLO GAMES.

N.B. Simple and Tourné Games are always reckoned as in the Standard Game. See the foregoing Tables.

DESCRIPTION OF GAME.	WITH ONE MATADOR.				WITH TWO.				WITH THREE.				WITH FOUR.				WITH FIVE.			
	Game.	Schneider.	Declared.	Schwarz.	Game.	Schneider.	Declared.	Schwarz.	Game.	Schneider.	Declared.	Schwarz.	Game.	Schneider.	Declared.	Schwarz.	Game.	Schneider.	Declared.	Schwarz.
FIRST VARIATION OF THE BASIS VALUE (see page 39). Solo counts the same as Tourné. See Preceding Tables, tit. Tourné.																				
SECOND VARIATION OF THE BASIS VALUE (see p. 40). Basis Values for Grando 12 and 16, as in the Standard Game.																				
Solo in	Diamonds	6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60	66	72	78	84	90	96	102	108	114
	Hearts	8	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80	88	96	104	112	120	128	136	144	152
	Spades	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140	150	160	170	180	190
	Clubs	12	24	36	48	60	72	84	96	108	120	132	144	156	168	180	192	204	216	228
	Solo in	6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60	66	72	78	84	90	96	102	108	114
VARIATION IN THE COMPUTATION OF SOLO GAMES BY INCREASE OF THE MULTIPLIER (see p. 45).																				
Solo in	Diamonds	5	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
	Hearts	6	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60	66	72	78	84	90	96	102	108	114	120
	Spades	7	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70	77	84	91	98	105	112	119	126	133	140
	Clubs	8	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80	88	96	104	112	120	128	136	144	152	160
VARIATION IN THE COMPUTATION OF SOLO GAMES BY 50% INCREASE OF THE PRODUCT (see p. 45).																				
Solo in	Diamonds	5	15	22	30	37	45	52	60	67	75	82	90	97	105	112	120	127	135	142
	Hearts	6	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90	99	108	117	126	135	144	153	162	171
	Spades	7	21	31	42	52	63	73	84	94	105	115	126	136	147	157	168	178	189	199
	Clubs	8	24	36	48	60	72	84	96	108	120	132	144	156	168	180	192	204	216	228

BEER SKAT.*

BY the term Beer Skat is understood a variety of the Game of Skat, introduced by the youths of the Universities, and played more particularly for beer and in beer-drinking circles.

The rules, principles, and methods of play, as also the values of the different games, are exactly the same as in Skat proper, which for the sake of distinction we may call Money Skat. The only essential differences between Money Skat and Beer Skat lie in the modes of reckoning, the object (so to speak) of the game, and the nature of the stakes, which in Skat proper consist of money, but in Beer Skat usually of articles of personal consumption, such as beer, coffee, cigars and the like. In Skat proper, like most other card games, the player aims at making a profit for himself, involving a corresponding loss to his fellow-players, and to that end uses all his acuteness to play his cards to the best possible advantage. It is otherwise with Beer Skat, which is intended merely as a diversion to pass the time at club and tavern merrymakings, and must therefore involve neither too much intellectual strain, nor any loss so serious as to mar the enjoyment of the social circle. The object of the Player is here no longer to win as much as possible, but merely

* Skat is by no means the only game of the Fatherland which has received a new development from an alliance with beer-drinking. Rammes, Cerevis, and Quodlibet, card games dear to the German student, are all played for beer. That the stakes should take such a form can hardly be regarded as a desirable arrangement, but the fact by no means imports such a condition of general inebriety as it would suggest to an English reader. German beer, as a rule, contains a very small percentage of alcohol, half a dozen glasses of Pilsener having less intoxicating effect than a single pint of English ale. Indeed, a German at his *kneipe* will not hesitate (without any inducement in the shape of play) to drink a considerably larger number.

Beer Skat is hardly likely to become a popular game among English readers, but as the volume from which we translate professes to be an account of Skat in all its forms, we have not ventured to mutilate the text by suppressing the few pages which deal with this item.

to make his opponents lose enough to secure free entertainment for himself.

This indicates pretty exactly the course of the game at Beer Skat.

In keeping the score at Money Skat it is a settled rule that each player is credited or debited with the points to the good (*plus*) or to the bad (*minus*) which he has made by his game; with no limit of gain or loss. At Beer Skat only the *minus* points (in the case of a won game debited as lost by the opponents) are recorded, and those only up to an agreed limit.

The two games or recognised methods of scoring at Beer Skat are known respectively as Salmon Skat and Mark Skat.

a. SALMON SKAT.

1. Whichever of three players first has $3 \times 60 (= 180)$, or of four players has $4 \times 60 (= 240)$ *minus* points to his debit is "out," and is said to have "caught a salmon;" *i.e.*, he has lost one round, and must pay for three (or, as the case may be, four) glasses of beer, cups of coffee, cigars, or whatever else may have been agreed upon, such number including one for his own consumption.

Variation.—In many Skat circles that player is considered to have "caught the salmon," who first, of three players, reaches 150, or of four players, 200 (or according to some, 270 points); or overpasses those numbers respectively.

2. Any player being a "Maiden," *i.e.*, not having a single point scored against him, when some other player goes "out" and catches the salmon, is entitled to receive a double stake, *viz.* two glasses of beer, or whatever may be the agreed medium of payment.

N.B.—It should be agreed beforehand whether such extra stake is to be paid only in kind, or whether the winner may elect to receive its money value.

3. A player who has so few points against him that he lacks more of catching the salmon (at whichever of the above-

mentioned figures this may be fixed) than all the other players together, is "out of the fight," *i.e.*, he runs no risk of catching the salmon, for no matter who, save himself, declares and wins or loses a game, one of the other players must necessarily reach the fatal number sooner than himself.

It is customary for a player in such a position to "pass" each game, and while strictly observing the rules, as impartially as possible, to let the other contending parties fight out the matter between themselves.

A player in the foregoing position can only be brought into the contest again by losing a Ramsch, the loss in this case being scored against one player only.

4. So soon as a salmon has been caught, the score starts afresh, the deal passing in due rotation.

Variation.—In some circles the loser is entitled to be *elder hand* for the next round, the player next to his right dealing.

5. At the conclusion of a game, should two or all three of the players reach or overpass the agreed limit, that player is the loser who had the highest score against him prior to the commencement of the game.

Example (a).—The score stands as follows:—A. 148; B. 136; C. 140. A. wins a Grando of 48 points, thereby making both B. and C. "out." C. is regarded as the loser.

Example (b).—The score stands:—A. 198; B. 136; C. 198; and D. 137. D. wins a game of 60 points. A. and C. are both "out" simultaneously, and either divide the loss between them, or cast lots who shall pay the whole.

In many circles, instead of casting lots, a compulsory Ramsch is played, which does not come into the general score, but such one of the two losing players as makes the highest number of points in the Ramsch, has "caught the salmon."

6. As we have already stated, winning points are not scored. The winner, therefore, has nothing set against his name, but his fellow-players are debited with the value of his game as their loss.

THE GAME OF SKAT.

Example.—The score stands as follows :—

A.	B.	C.	D.
45	10	15	20

A. wins a game of 36 points. The score will then stand as under :—

A.	B.	C.	D.
45	46	51	56

7. The game (except as above mentioned) is never decided by the result of a Ramsch ; so that even if a player has 179 points against him, and loses a Ramsch, he is not thereby made “ out,” but, on the contrary, the game is continued till a game lost or won decides the contest adversely to one or another player.

b. MARK SKAT.

In this merriest of all games the score is usually kept by each player for himself, with chalk upon the table ; and each drinks as much as he can, in order to punish the loser, for at Mark Skat the losing player makes his payment, not to his fellow-players, but always to the waiter.

1. The player who first has 60 points scored against him gets a “ mark.” The number of marks that may be obtained is unlimited ; and no payment is made until play is over for the evening. One of the players keeps the general score of “ marks.”

Variation.—When there are four players, 80 points are sometimes reckoned as a mark.

2. So soon as a mark has been made against any player, each rubs out the figures against him, and a fresh game is begun with an entirely new score, save in the case of a “ Persian,” as explained in par. 5, *post.*

3. For each “ Maiden,” an additional mark is scored against the losing player.

Example (a).—The score stands:—A. 12 ; B. 0 ; C. 12 ; D. 12. D. loses a game of 24, *i.e.*, $24 \times 3 = 72$. He is, therefore, “out” (with 84 points), and receives two marks, because B. is still “Maiden.”

Example (b).—The score stands:—A. 0 ; B. 0 ; C. 30 ; D. 0. A. (the Player) wins a game of 36 points, consequently C. is “out,” and has *four* marks placed to his debit, being one additional for each “Maiden.”

4. Every player who reaches or goes over 60 receives a mark, if, therefore, for example, the score being as follows, A. 40 ; B. 40 ; C. 50 ; D. 36, D. wins a game of 25 or 48 points, A., B., and C. each receive a mark. Should D., on the other hand, lose his game, a mark will be scored against him.

5. If a game is won of the value of 60 points (or 80)* or more points, this is known as a “Persian.” Each player other than the winner, has a mark made against him (or several if there be one or more “Maidens”). The score already begun remains intact, *i.e.*, play continues and additions are made to the score, just as if the “Persian” had not occurred.

Example.—The score stands:—A. 12 ; B. 12 ; C. 0 ; D. 12. C. plays a *Grando*, worth 80 points, and thereby makes a “Persian,” he himself being a “Maiden.” A., B. and D. each receive two marks, and each still has 12 points towards the next mark, these being left standing.

N.B.—A lost game which (by reason of the multiplication of the number of players) costs the loser more than 60 points, does not constitute a Persian. The absolute value of the game must exceed 60 (or as the case may be) 80 points.*

6. “Remitted” games (see pars. 7, 8) which are subsequently taken into account never constitute a “Persian,” even if more than 60 (or 80) * points are thereby scored.

* 80 in the case of a four-handed game. See par. 1, p. 132.

7. A player who wins a game, may "remit" it; *i.e.*, may elect that such game shall not be scored against his opponents.

As a rule, a player only remits a game as above mentioned, if he is elder hand for the next game. The object is to reserve the benefit of a "Maiden," by means of which he hopes later on to score a larger number of marks against his fellow-players.

A "Persian" cannot be remitted.

8. Should a player, who has just remitted a game, and is now in usual course elder hand, win the next game also, each of his opponents is debited with the value of the second and double the value of the first (the remitted) game.

Example.—A. wins a game of 20 points, and remits it, all four players being as yet "Maidens." He is elder hand for the next round, and wins a game of 42. Each of the other players is thereupon debited with 42 *plus* $(2 \times 20) = 40$, = 82, and receives a mark for the game. As there are four "Maidens," each receives four more marks, or five in all.

Should the remitting player fail to win the next game, or should the next game be a *Ramsch*, the remitted game is no longer taken into consideration.

9. In some circles *any* game which follows a "remitted" game, no matter who plays or wins it, is scored double against the losers. In this case it is permissible to remit several games in succession; the value of the next *unremitted* game is then multiplied by the number of games previously remitted.

A game lost by the Player interrupts the series of remissions. The loser scores against himself the value of such game, multiplied by the number of those previously remitted. A *Ramsch* in like manner puts an end to the series, but in this case the remitted games are not taken into account.

10. At the close of the evening's play an account is taken of the refreshments consumed, and of the number of marks

scored against the various players. The value of each mark is then computed, and payment made accordingly.

Example.—The reckoning is 42 glasses of beer at three halfpence each. 126 marks have been scored. The players have, therefore, to pay one halfpenny for each mark.

Or, say that the reckoning is, as before, 42 glasses, and that the score stands as under :—

	A.	B.	C.	D.
Marks	42	21	26	58

In order to simplify matters the lowest score is reduced to zero, and a corresponding amount deducted from that of each of the other players. The score will then stand as under :—

	A.	B.	C.	D.
Marks	42	21	26	58
Deduct	21	21	21	21
	—	—	—	—
	21	0	5	37, in all 63 marks.
	==	==	==	==

Each mark is therefore worth $\frac{42}{63} = \frac{2}{3}$ of the cost of a glass of beer, *i.e.*, one penny.

11. Mark Skat being, properly speaking, only a beer-game following the rules of Skat, the competitors often at the close play one against another for their marks, until at last one player has the whole of the number, and pays the whole of the reckoning.*

The Course of the Game.

As the game itself, as we have already stated, does not differ in any particular from Skat proper, we refer the reader

* Thus A. has 6 marks against him. B. and C. 3 each, and D. 12. B. and C. play double or quits. B. (say) is the winner, and is thereby freed from liability, while C. has now 6 points to his debit. He plays against A. for these. A. wins. C.'s liability is now 12 points. These he plays for against D.'s 12, and the loser pays the whole score.

for all that concerns the method of play, the rules, and principles of the game, to the preceding pages, only adding thereto one or two rules which have a special application to Beer Skat.

1. At Beer Skat the player should as a rule be even more cautious than in Money Skat, since a lost game can seldom or never be again made good. You should, therefore, never declare any game that does not appear absolutely safe, but hold aloof even with promising cards, in the hope of eventually overthrowing the person who may become the Player.

Exception 1.—Even a doubtful game should be risked, if winning it would score so many points against one or other of the adversaries as to make him overpass the limit (and so be “out”), while losing it would not do the same for yourself as Player.

Exception 2.—If one of the players is in a very bad position, while the others have few or no points scored against them, he should play and risk even the most hazardous game, as he may often through some stroke of luck get the better of the over-cautious players. He can in any case do himself no greater harm than to get a mark, or “catch the salmon,” and this he is sure to do so soon as either of the other players wins a game.

2. Ramsch, in the Salmon Game, is usually played with the ordinary method of reckoning; but at Mark Skat, Point Ramsch is almost invariably played. (*See pp. 36, 37.*)

3. In Ramsch the same rules of play prevail as were given in the case of Money Skat, with the addition of one new rule, namely:—

High scoring cards are, whenever possible, swarmed upon that player who has the largest number of points already scored against him, and is therefore the most likely to “catch the salmon,” or get a “mark.”

4. A round of Point Ramsch cannot constitute a Persian ; even though its value should be over 60 (or 80) points.

And now, in conclusion, a final word of caution to beginners. Beer Skat is a diversion for practised Skat players, but tends to spoil the novice from the very outset, because the latter, unpractised in judging and declaring his game, naturally drifts into the easier (and at Beer Skat quite correct) plan of "passing," and in consequence never attains to a mastery of Skat proper. It is true that the possible loss at Beer Skat, particularly in the "Salmon" game, is a limited and to some extent calculable amount, while the possible loss at Money Skat is unlimited, and this circumstance often induces the beginner to give the preference to Salmon Skat.

Moreover, many liberties are allowed in games which are played merely for the cost of refreshments, and the beginner every now and then receives in this way assistance which would be absolutely forbidden in a game played for money. Thus many a player at the "Salmon" game will say to his partner, "he is done for," "I shall beat him," or the like, though the same person playing at Money Skat would instantly throw down his cards if another were to indicate, even by a look, the card to be played. As we have said, the beginner gets in this way now and then a hint, or momentary assistance in his perplexity or inattention, but such assistance tends to ruin him completely as a Skat player.

The object of Beer Skat—to procure entertainment at small pecuniary risk, and to promote fun and good fellowship—has been carried so far that the elementary rules for the guidance of the player (we do not mean the actual rules of the game) are disregarded. Misdeals, unintentional omissions to score, exposing or otherwise disclosing cards, &c., go alike unpunished ; indeed, at *very* jovial parties a kind of Skat is played independent of all rules, a Skat in which even mere spectators are allowed to take part, and in which all kinds of irregularities and even unfair play are tolerated.

We refrain from a more minute description. Any one who wishes to become acquainted with this kind of Skat should take an opportunity to visit a party of German students, past or present, assembled at their favourite tavern in a more than ordinarily "happy and glorious" condition.

TWO-HANDED SKAT.

FOR the sake of completeness, we may in conclusion mention Two-handed Skat. The necessity of finding a third partner has been here the mother of invention, and has created a game which has many attractions for those who take part in it, and at any rate serves as a very acceptable substitute for the more complete game.

In two-handed Skat the cards are divided as follows:—The two players first receive each ten cards, divided as usual into sets of five. In the course of the deal the two Skat cards are duly laid aside, in accordance with the rules of the regular game. (*See* page 22.) The dealer has still ten cards left in hand. These are divided into two heaps of five each, and laid upon the table, one on each side of the "Skat."

Each player takes up the ten cards dealt to him, and declares upon such cards a game (Simple, Tourné, Solo, Grando, or Nullo, as the case may be), in like manner as in three-handed Skat. Should neither declare a game, Ramsch is played. Should either player declare a game, each plays his ten cards in the ordinary way. This done, each player takes up the five reserve cards nearest to himself, and play is continued with these till all are exhausted.

It is obvious that by this means very peculiar situations are created, which lend the game an attraction of its own.

When *Nullo* or *Ramsch* is played, no use is made of the ten reserve cards, the play being confined to the ten cards originally dealt to each.

TWO-HANDED SKAT.

In Nullo games, from the fact that there are only twenty cards in play, it is obvious that the task of the Player is made materially easier. This may at the pleasure of the players be made up for by an agreed diminution in the value and relative position of that game.

The Score.

The mode of Scoring is very simple. One of the players takes charge of the scoring paper, and keeps account of the points (*plus* or *minus* as the case may be) on either side. The difference between the two totals gives the amount won, which at the close of the play is paid in money, according to the agreed value of the stakes.





APPENDIX.

I. CURIOSITIES OF SKAT.



WE have yet to call attention to a few more specimen games, which, however, must be regarded more or less as belonging to the category of curiosities.

EXAMPLE XXVII.

Problem.—To divide the cards between the three players in such a manner that each shall have (irrespective of the “Skat”) an absolutely safe game, of the value of not less than 72 points (according to the valuation adopted in the game. (See Table, p. 125.)

Answer.

The elder hand has—



and declares Grand Oouvert.

Middle (or hinder) hand has—



and is in a position to declare Nullo Revolution.

Third (or middle) hand has—

CURIOSITIES OF SKAT.



and can also declare *Nullo Revolution*.

EXAMPLE XXVIII.

In a *compulsory* Grando,* the Player has no ace or ten; only one king and only two knaves in his hand, and yet makes his opponents *Schwarz*.

The hand of the Player is as under :—



1. What cards were there in the "Skat?" 2. What was the course of play, or, in other words, how did the cards fall?

Answer.

1. The "Skat" cards are the ace of Clubs and ace of Diamonds.

2. The Player leads his knave of Spades, and the second hand plays upon it the ten of Clubs, that being his only card of that suit. The last knave falls to the knave of Clubs. The Player then leads his Clubs, beginning with the eight. Second hand swarms upon it the ten of Diamonds, and elder hand throws away on the second or third Club trick his unguarded king of Diamonds. The Player has then the remaining tricks in his own hand.

We cannot encourage our readers to expect a similar hand to turn out so fortunately.

EXAMPLE XXIX.

Nullo Ouvert.

In a *compulsory* Nullo,* elder hand has to play *Nullo Ouvert* with the cards following :—



* See p. 38.

THE GAME OF SKAT.

How must the cards be distributed to enable the elder hand to win a Nullo Ouvert under such conditions ?

Answer.

One of the Opponents held the following cards :—



The Player (elder hand) leads the seven of Hearts, and the Opponent above mentioned wins both this and all the remaining tricks. Under the same conditions the Player might lead either of his knaves (Club, Spade or Diamond) with the same result.

With such a hand a mistake is almost out of the question.

EXAMPLE XXX.

Middle hand (with cards as under) has provoked the elder hand up to 36, and the latter then passing, declares a Solo in Clubs. The Player must, therefore, to secure the requisite value, either find the knave of Clubs in the "Skat," or make his opponents *Schneider*.*



The hope of finding the knave of Clubs in the "Skat" being a very slender one, the Player endeavours to Schneider his opponents. This is only possible if the cards are favourably distributed.

The elder hand leads the ace of Spades ; the Player, conjecturing that the lead is from a long suit of Spades, trumps with the knave of Diamonds, to prevent the trick being taken

* The value of a Club Solo without the best matador (see Table on p. 125) is 24 only. If the Player Schneiders his opponents, his game becomes worth 36. If he finds the missing knave in the "Skat," his game will then be *with four*, and will be worth 60 (or with Schneider 72).

by the ace of trumps (Clubs).^{*} Hinder hand, though holding the best knave, does not over-trump with it, but plays a small Heart. The Player leads the second knave, which is taken by hinder hand, elder hand swarming the ace of Hearts on the trick (— 15). Hinder hand now leads the ten of Diamonds, elder hand takes it with the ace of Diamonds, and the Player plays king of Diamonds (— 25). Elder hand now leads the ten of Spades; the Player must therefore win it either with his last knave or with a small trump; in the former case the ace of trumps, which is with hinder hand, is now good, and the ten of Hearts is swarmed upon it; in the latter case, it is employed to overtrump the Player, in either case the Opponents secure 21 points more. The Player has therefore lost the game, his Opponents having 61 points.

Query.—How would the game stand if the Player were not compelled to secure the Schneider, in order to save the game?

Answer.—The Player, who, as we have already remarked, conjectures that his Opponents hold a long suit of Spades, throws away king of Diamonds on ace of Spades led, trumps the ten of Spades with the knave of Diamonds, and if, as is probable, this is overtrumped, he has all the remaining tricks in his own hand. Should the knave of Diamonds not be overtrumped, the Player then forces out the knave of Clubs, and when he again gets the lead, draws the ace of trumps. The Opponents have secured in their first trick 26 points, and in their second, 14; total, 46 points.

EXAMPLE XXXI.

At a card-party where, in accordance with the older fashion, neither Grando nor Nullo were recognised, the second hand held the following cards:—



^{*} Should the Player play a small card, the third hand would trump with the ace, thereby securing a trick of 22 points.

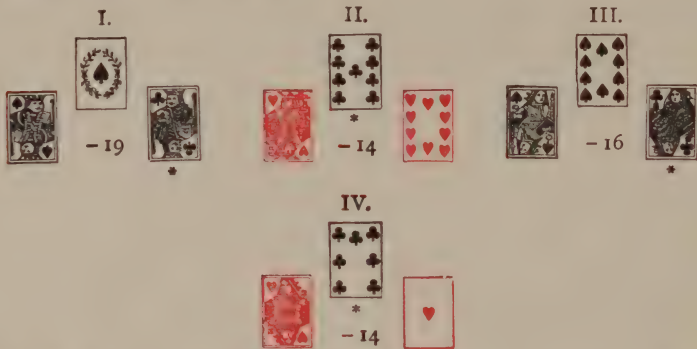
THE GAME OF SKAT.

In the "Skat" were the ace and ten of Diamonds. The Player declared a Solo in Clubs, but lost the game.

How did he manage it?

Answer.

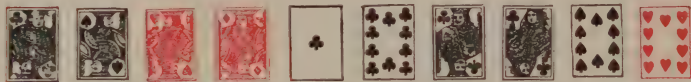
A Solo in Clubs with six matadors and all the rest aces and tens seems as if it could not possibly be lost, but such is not the case. See below.



And the game is lost, the Opponents having obtained 63 points.

EXAMPLE XXXII.

(Solo in Clubs lost with Ten Matadors.)



The eight and nine of Clubs are in the "Skat." The player declares a Solo in Clubs (or a Grando), but loses the game, whether he is placed second or third hand. How were the cards divided, and how were they played?

Answer.

The elder hand has all the remaining Hearts, the ace of Diamonds, and the seven of Clubs. The third player has all

the remaining Spades, and the ten of Diamonds. The position of the other cards is immaterial.

The Play.—The elder hand Opponent leads the ace of Hearts, to which the Player must of necessity play his ten of Hearts, and the third hand swarms the ten of Diamonds. (— 31.) Elder hand then plays the seven of trumps, in order to throw the lead into the hand of the Player. The latter takes the trick, and then either leads trumps first, or plays at once his ten of Spades. In any case the Spade trick remains the same. The Player leads the ten, the second hand takes with the ace, and the third swarms upon it the ace of Diamonds. (— 32.) Total — 63.

Where Player is Elder Hand.

Even though the Player be elder hand, the game is also lost should he lead trumps (from either end of the sequence) in the hope of an injudicious discard on the part of the Opponents, and they do not “swarm” one of the three aces on the ten of Diamonds. The game is also lost should he trump the lead of the Opponents, instead of throwing away his last unguarded ten.

2. PROBLEMS.



WE give by way of conclusion a series of Skat Problems, whose solution will form an agreeable exercise to the practised player, and a very useful one to the novice. The solutions we have omitted, in order to incite the reader to think them out for himself, and devise schemes of opposing play. Some of the problems are specially designed for beginners, and are therefore made very easy.

THE GAME OF SKAT.

PROBLEM I.



With the foregoing cards the Player might declare—

Grando with four Matadors	=	80
Club Solo with seven „	=	96
Spade Solo with four „	}	99
Schwarz declared		

Question.—Assuming the Player to be elder hand, which is his only *certain* game?

PROBLEM II.

The Player, holding the following cards, declares Grando.



Neither of the Opponents has a *renonce* in Hearts or Clubs. The ace, ten, and king of Clubs are in the same hand, likewise the ace and ten of Hearts, and cannot therefore fall together. By what line of play will the game be won, and by what line of play will it be lost?

PROBLEM III.

Nulló.



Under what circumstances will the Nulló necessarily be lost?

PROBLEM IV.

The Player (second hand) has turned up the nine of Hearts, and has taken in with it the ten of Clubs, his hand then being as follows :—

PROBLEMS.



The cards he threw out were the ten of Diamonds and the queen of Spades (= 13). The Player only made (including the 13 above mentioned) 19 points. The Opponents held in one hand three trumps, and in the other, four. What was the distribution of the cards, and how were they played?

PROBLEM V.



What game should be declared with the above cards: (a) the Player being elder hand; (b) the Player being second or third hand?

PROBLEM VI.

The Player (second hand) declares Grando on the cards following:—



The Opponents are "out" with 69 points, before the Player has made a single trick. What was the distribution of the cards, and how were they played?

PROBLEM VII.

The Player (elder hand) has—



The Player (declaring Tourné) turns up the seven of Clubs, takes in with it the ten of Diamonds, and wins the game. The cards he threw out were the ten of Diamonds and the king of Spades. What was the distribution of the cards, and how were they played?

THE GAME OF SKAT.

PROBLEM VIII.

*(Grando without Four, or Club Solo without Eleven.
Beer Skat.)*

The Player (first, second, or third hand) holds the cards following :—



In the "Skat" are the eight of Hearts and the nine of Diamonds. The Player wins with 77 points. What was the play ?

PROBLEM IX.

(Tourné in Spades without Nine.)

The Player (second hand) holds the following cards :—



He turns up the eight of Spades, takes in with it the queen of Clubs, and wins the game. What did he discard, and how were the cards played ?

PROBLEM X.

The Player (hinder hand) has the cards following :—



He turns up the king of Diamonds and takes in with it the ace of Spades. He discards the king of Spades and king of Clubs, and loses the game. What were the distribution and fall of the cards ?

PROBLEM XI.

(Nullo Ouvert.)



PROBLEMS.

The Player (elder hand), with the above cards, declares *Nullo Ouvert*, and loses. What were the distribution and fall of the cards?

PROBLEM XII.

The Player (second hand), provoked by the hinder hand, declares a Solo in Clubs, with the cards following:—



The Player is made *Schwarz*.

(1.) How were the cards distributed, and how were they played?

(2.) By what line of play could the Player have escaped the *Schwarz*?

PROBLEM XIII.

At a card party, where, in accordance with the older fashion, neither *Grando* nor *Nullo* was recognized, second hand held the following cards, as already mentioned among the Curiosities of Skat, No. XXXI.



In the "*Skat*" were the ace and ten of Diamonds.

The Player received a timely hint that he had fallen into a company of practical jokers, who had arranged to entrap him into a loss. He, however, did not lose, but on the contrary made his opponents *Schwarz*. How was this possible?

PROBLEM XIV.

The Player (second or third hand) holds the cards following:—



THE GAME OF SKAT.

He turns up the king of Clubs, takes in with it the knave of Clubs, discards his two Diamonds, and is beaten before he has made a single trick. What was the distribution and fall of the cards?

PROBLEM XV.

The Player (second hand) has the following cards:—



He declares a Solo in Spades, and loses. What was the distribution and fall of the cards?

PROBLEM XVI.

The Player (second hand), holding the following cards—



declares Grando and loses the game. How were the cards distributed, and how were they played?

PROBLEM XVII.

The Player (hinder hand) holds the cards following:—



The other two players having passed, he declares Tourné, in the hope of finding a knave in the “Skat.” He turns up the eight of Hearts, and takes in with it the ten of Diamonds. What should he discard? and to win, what must be the fall of the cards?

PROBLEM XVIII.

The Player (second hand) declares a Solo in Spades with the cards following:—



PROBLEMS.

He is *Schneidered*. How must the remaining cards lie, and how must they be played?

PROBLEM XIX.

The Player (second hand), with the following cards, declares *Nullu Ouvert*—



and loses the game, although the remaining Diamonds are equally divided between the other two players. How were the cards distributed, and how were they played?

PROBLEM XX.

The Player (second hand) has :—



He declares a *Solo* in Spades. The cards of the “*Skat*” are the eight and nine of Spades. The Player loses. What was the distribution and fall of the cards?

PROBLEM XXI.

The Player holds the cards following :—



He turns up the king of Clubs, and takes in with it the ace of Spades. What must the Player discard in order to make his game absolutely safe : (a) if elder hand ; (b) if second or third hand.

PROBLEM XXII.

A player who has “*passed*” during the whole evening, when it comes to the last deal declares, without looking at his cards,

THE GAME OF SKAT.

a Solo in Hearts. He is elder hand, and has the following cards :—



Under what circumstances can he win the game ?

PROBLEM XXIII.

(*Club Tourné without Ten.*)

The Player (elder hand) has the following cards :—



He turns up the seven of Clubs, and takes in with it the ace of Diamonds.

- (1.) What should he discard ?
- (2.) How is it possible for him to win the game ?

PROBLEM XXIV.

A player holds cards as under :—



What should he declare ? What game is absolutely safe, and what game uncertain ?

THE END.

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